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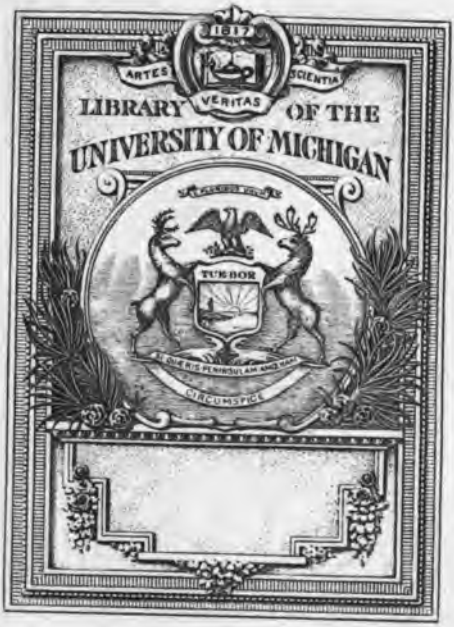
THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS IN INDIA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THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS IN INDIA.

From Juganath to the Himalaya Mountains.

BY

WILLIAM TAYLER, ESQ.,
RETIRED B.C.S., LATE COMMISSIONER OF PATNA.

WITH 100 ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR.

VOL I.

LONDON:
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1881.

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To the Wife

WHO,

FOR FIFTY-ONE LONG YEARS,

IN PROSPERITY AND ADVERSITY,

HAS EVER BEEN

THE JOY AND COMFORT OF MY LIFE,

THIS BOOK

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY

WILLIAM TAYLER,

RETIRED B.C.S.

1881.

PREFACE.

An autobiographer always apologises, or ought to apologise, to the public.

My apology in the present instance is, that my life in India, instead of being monotonous and uninterest ing, as the life of a Bengal civilian usually is, has been varied and eventful. I have visited almost every station in Orissa and Bengal, have not only endured the depressing heat of the plains, but have enjoyed the glorious scenery and exhilarating climate of Darjeeling, Simlah, and Nepal; have served in all departments of the State, including that of Postmaster-General, and have been more than once in danger of my life. In the Mutiny of 1857, I was the Commissioner of Patna, and as a reward and recompense for saving the most important province of Bengal, was dismissed from my appointment with disgrace; resigned the service to avoid starvation, and afterwards, when in an independent position, passed eight years replete with adventure and excitement. I may perhaps add that I went out to India in 1829, as a lad, and returned after thirty-eight

years as an extensive grandfather. And last, though not least, I have kept illustrations of all I saw or did during my life, from elephants to tooth-picks.

To this imperfect catalogue of causes, I may add, with no ordinary gratitude, that during these long years of my varied existence, I have made and still retain a large body of sincere and noble friends, the value of whose attachment has been rendered more precious by the contrast which it has on several occasions afforded to the petty jealousy of a small band of interested opponents, and the unfeeling persecution of official tyranny.

Here, then, is my apology, briefly sketched, but sufficient, I hope, to justify my egotism, disarm the criticism of the captious, and secure for my presumptuous production the candid consideration of its readers.

To those of my friends who have kindly assisted me with reminiscences, dates, and half-forgotten facts, I would here wish to offer my sincere and grateful thanks, and to all those who have shown their kind appreciation of my work, by subscribing to the publication, my best acknowledgment for the encouragement which their names have afforded.

W. TAYLER.

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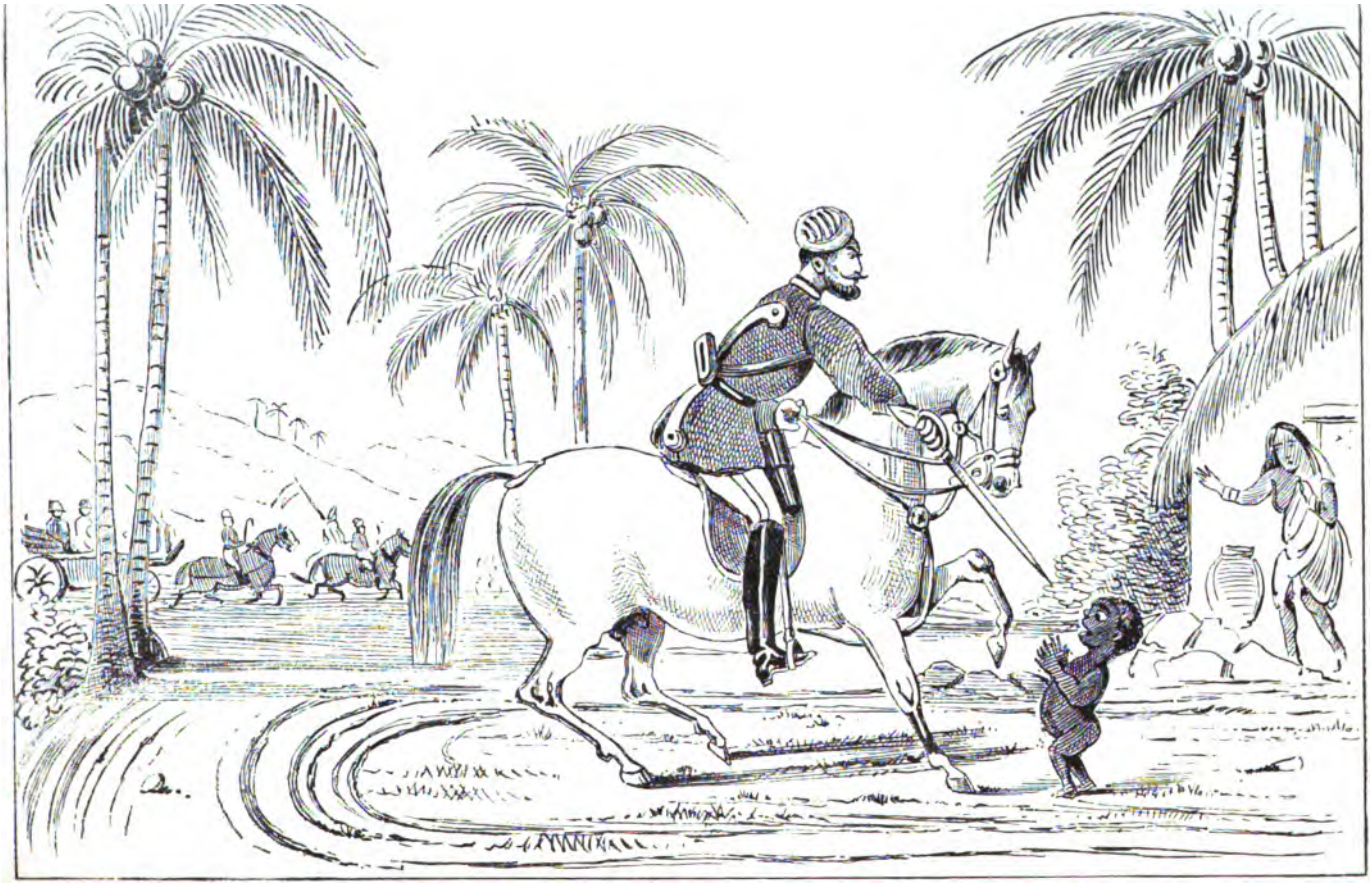

THE ONLY SERIOUS OBSTACLE

WHICH

THE PRINCE OF WALES

MET WITH

IN HIS TOUR THROUGH INDIA.

Although the interesting incident which I have exhibited in the frontispiece of this book did not take place until several years after the period at which my Autobiography terminates, yet, as the auspicious and eventful visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, so wisely conceived and so successfully carried out, produced a most favourable impression throughout the country, I need scarcely apologise for introducing the little group, though at the sacrifice of chronological consistency, in a book devoted to Indian realities.

The scene represents one of the well known Sir Frank Souter's gallant troopers clearing the way for the royal carriage. The man was a reality, the child a fortuitous though characteristic atom. Both were taken from life.

It is possible that His Royal Highness may not himself have been fully aware of the serious obstacles which occasionally had to be removed from his path.

W. T.

THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS IN INDIA,

FROM JUGANATH

TO THE HIMALAYA MOUNTAINS.

CHAPTER I.

How I obtained my Indian Writership.—Sudden change of Career. Interview with Director of the East India Company.—Examination.—Caricatures in lieu of Algebra.—Passage taken in the "Victory."—Captain Farquharson.—Trip by Coach to Portsmouth with my brother Frederick Tayler.—Glimpse of my future Wife, then Miss Palmer.—My Brother's Prediction.—Love at First Sight.—My Brother's imaginary Sketch of my Return to England.—Prophecy how fulfilled.

THAT "Great events from little causes spring" is a fact which doubtless had presented itself to many bewildered mortals long before the elopement of Helen brought destruction upon Troy, but that a mere accident, totally unexpected, and which could

never have entered into the calculations of the person principally affected, should, in a minute of time, entirely and radically change the whole course of his future life, is not a very usual, and may fairly be termed a strange occurrence.

But this is precisely and literally what happened to me at the eventful period of my life, when just passing from legal "infancy" to practical manhood.

"There's a divinity which shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

In the spring of 1829 I was staying in the house of a friend in Devonshire who held a writership, and expected to go very shortly to India. His father was bed-ridden through protracted and hopeless disease. His mother and sisters were in the house. One morning, after breakfast, my friend came into the room where I was sitting, and told me his father had just died; that he had left him £800 a-year, and he therefore intended to remain in England; adding, "I have no idea of going to that abominable country, to be devoured by mosquitos and killed by cholera." Then, suddenly, and evidently on the spur of the moment, turning to me, he said, "By-the-bye, would you like to have my appointment?" Seeing that I treated the offer as a joke, he added, "I really mean it, and am sure it could be managed. I will fetch my mother." He then left the room, and in a few minutes returned with his good mother, who confirmed what he said; but added, that if I wished to accept the appointment I must make up my mind at once, as she considered it a point of honour to inform

the Director who had given it, without delay of her son's decision. Here was an anxious and bewildering moment! Never had I dreamed of leaving England. I had been educated at the Charterhouse; had kept my first term at Christchurch; looked forward to academical honours; and my dear mother had made up her mind that I was to become Lord High Chancellor, or Archbishop of Canterbury, at least! Far away from her, from all my relations and friends, with little real knowledge of what an Indian career offered or contained, with a few minutes only for reflection or argument, I had to decide a question which affected my whole future life and prospects. It was a crisis; but there was a certain fascination in the novelty presented. Speaking as a Mahomedan, I should say my "kismut," or destiny, impelled me; speaking as a Christian, I say that God guided me. I gave my consent, the bargain was closed, and the kind old lady wrote her letter.

Thus did the fortuitous caprice of one unstable, though kindly individual, instantaneously upset the premeditated plans and deliberate calculations of his fellow-mortal, carrying with it a chain of unlooked-for results, and bringing home to my mind what we are too apt to forget, that we are but poor and helpless creatures, whose lives are in higher hands than our own.

Often have I amused myself with the reflection that, but for this, which most would call, accident; had I not been in that house at that particular moment; had not my volatile friend been imbued with horror at the idea of mosquitos and cholera, and had not the

appointment been held by the mother on conditions which enabled her to transfer it, I should never have seen India; never have met the wife with whom I have passed more than fifty years of uninterrupted happiness; the forty grand-children whom I now possess would never have seen the light, and Patna would not have been endangered by my "violent and unwise proceedings" in the Mutiny of 1857.

When the Director's assent was received, I started for London. It was one of those years in which extra writers were required, and twenty appointments were given to candidates who had not been to the preparatory college at Hayleybury, but who were prepared to pass the required examination.

Henry Torrens, J. Crawford, Pierce Taylor, Thomas Pycroft, and many other well-known civilians were among those who thus obtained their writerships.

Directly I reached London I called, as in duty bound, on Mr. Huddlestone, the director who had consented to transfer the appointment—a kind old gentleman, who gave me excellent counsel, and, above all other things, advised me to eat as much rice as possible when I reached India.

The next step was the examination, and, as this ordeal was accompanied by rather an amusing incident, I will briefly describe it.

The ceremony took place at the old "India House," in Leadenhall Street.

Two examiners, an Oxonian and a Cantab, were deputed for the occasion; there was a test-paper distributed, but the examinees were allowed to send

in a list of extra books in which they were willing, for distinction's sake, to be examined.

Having reached a somewhat advanced stage in Greek and Latin, my list of Classics was alarming, and it was hinted that, to some extent, I was humbugging the examiners. The consequence was, that I was subjected to an extra ordeal, to prove the reality of my professed acquirements. This was, perhaps, fortunate, as the result, being favourable, helped to save me from a dilemma.

In the test list was a paper in algebra. Now I had been educated at the Charterhouse, and had never learned either mathematics or algebra, and some thought that on this account I might be *spun*. There was no help for it, however—algebra could not be learned in a day—so, when the paper came before me, I wrote, with many misgivings, on a separate piece, "I have never learned algebra;" then, underneath, I drew some absurd caricatures, and left the papers all together.

Shortly afterwards we retired to a sideboard in the room to eat some sandwiches, and while there, I saw one of the examiners approach my table; it was a nervous moment; he raised my paper and read the fatal words; but immediately afterwards he took up my artistic performances, then quietly beckoned his fellow examiner, and, to my great delight, I saw them both in fits of laughter!

To this auspicious interlude of the comic, combined with my successful examination in the Classics, I attribute the happy issue. Not only was I *not* plucked, but passed second on the list, the first place being

taken by Mr. (now Sir Thomas) Pycroft, who, like a "good boy," did know algebra, and who was up in all the subjects.

It is a curious fact that, while caricature helped me out of a difficulty on this occasion, in subsequent years, as will be shown hereafter, it led, during another examination, to a serious disaster.

"All is well that ends well," however. The examination auspiciously passed, outfit procured, and the pain of farewell from many loved ones gone through, I set out for my long voyage to the east, with new hopes and new aspirations, a very scanty and imperfect knowledge of what was before me, but a sensation of pleasurable excitement, caused by the very ambiguity and haziness of my condition.

In those bygone days of which I am writing, the snort of the iron horse had only just been heard in the broad realms of Neptune; and our voyage was, therefore, to be made in one of the old East India ships.

That selected was the "Victory," a well-known first-class vessel, commanded by a very popular man, Captain Charles Farquharson, and was to sail from Portsmouth. To Portsmouth, therefore, I and my dearest brother Frederick, well-known as, for many years, the President of the old Water-colour Society, (the last survivor, now, of my eight brothers) travelled, not in the rapid rail-carriage, but in the old fashioned though comfortable stage coach.

Next morning the passengers all set off to the "Victory," which was lying at anchor at the usual distance from the pier; one large party went together

in a yacht; others in smaller vessels; my brother and I chose a boat and went together, rowed by a rough old sailor, who amused us, as far as we could be amused, by his quaint remarks.

We went together on board, and as we stepped up the ladder we caught sight of a party of ladies and gentlemen, among whom was Miss C. Palmer, now my wife, and joint proprietor of the forty grandchildren.

After looking at her, my brother suddenly turned to me and said, "William, you're done for"—little, perhaps, really imagining how soon and how surely his anticipations would be fulfilled.

The sentence was curiously prophetic, and received additional strength from the fact that many others, having heard that a remarkably pretty girl was to be a fellow-passenger, and knowing that I was not inaccessible to beauty, had, some in joke, some in earnest, uttered the same prediction.

Of my feelings at parting with my beloved brother I will not venture to speak, but will here give an extract from a letter received from him many months afterwards, which will give the reader an idea of our last moments, and will shew that his prophecy, uttered as we stepped on board, had become a reality sooner than even he expected.

22, Holland Street,
Dec. 19th, 1830.

My Dearest William,

To attempt in a few lines to say a thousandth part of my say is totally impossible; most difficult is it to know where to begin. But for this feeling, which has unconsciously had its

weight with me, you would, long ere this, have heard from me. I often look back with a kind of melancholy pleasure to the moment of our parting.

The tragic was so strangely mixed with the ridiculous, for, in leaving the stern of the ship, one of the last things that caught my eye was Mrs. F., whipping one of her children in a most business-like manner, in I suppose, the captain's cabin! The sailor who gave you a receipt for the prevention of sea-sickness, seeing me not a little eggy, observed, "I suppose you two be brother's ben't ye? Well, d——n my eyes, I parted from my brother just as it might be with you, and I blubbered like a two-year old, d——n my eyes."

You may easily think that Portsmouth, when I returned to it, was not the most agreeable place in the world. I made a resolution to leave it immediately on foot, as no coach was to be had till the evening. Had it not been for my luggage I should have done so; as it was, being unable to bear the sun, I strolled along the beach, and made use of the glasses of the Preventive Service men to catch a last glimpse of the "Victory." She was soon, however, out of sight, and I wandered, I hardly knew where, till, feeling sleepy, I laid down on the beach, and was awakened by the waves coming phizzing up my legs.

All this seems but a day or two ago, and now, to fancy you are married, which I conclude you are by this time.

I have no distinct recollection of your *cara*, but it is enough for me that she is the "Goddess of your idolatry," to make me feel already the affection of a brother towards her; and the countenance of the miniature you have sent is expressive of everything delightful, rather more of the *suaviter* than the *fortiter*, which in a woman is perfection.

And now, my dearest William, I must conclude. I am sure you are well aware of the sincerity and warmth of my affection, so I shall say no more on that score, neither shall I be didactic or descriptive on the delight that your letters will afford me at all times. But I will say that the greatest pleasure that I look forward to is your settled return to this country, rich and happy, with your better half hanging upon your arm, ayahs of sorts, &c.; but, stay, I think I could depict it better in pencil——

Since writing the above I have seen Repton (who sends you this letter), and heard several little incidents of yourself and your beloved—highly interesting.

He describes you with an enormous pair of whiskers, eating buns, and sketching caricatures at Poorah, or some such outlandish name. Your Charlotte, he says, is infinitely prettier than the miniature, the belle of Calcutta, and altogether a charming person.

And now, my dearest William, *do be economical*, and take care of yourself, or, rather, suffer your wife to take care of you, and in a few short years you will be able to return to us all, as my sketch describes.

God bless you ever.

(Signed) Your very affectionate brother,

F. TAYLER.

Thirty-eight years had elapsed after this letter was written, ere my brother's anticipations were fulfilled.

In 1867, however, I did return, with my wife, metaphorically at least, "hanging on my arm," though neither of us were exactly in the costume which his artistic imagination depicted.

But, alas! we arrived, not to find a large family group, as represented, with my beloved mother at its head to greet us—as the youngest of seventeen children, I could not hope for this—but, at least, I found my dear brother, the writer of the letter, alive and in the zenith of his fame, while the imaginary children of the picture were not unworthily represented by our children's children!

And I came after a long and faithful service in India, not to repose on my laurels, or reap the reward of anxious labour, but to do battle against misrepresentation and slander, to struggle in the sacred cause of truth against injustice and wrong, to contend against Principalities and Powers, and ask in the presence of God and man for justice.

How far my struggle has been successful will be seen before this work is concluded.

CHAPTER II.

Departure from Portsmouth.—Preliminary Sufferings.—First Meeting at Dinner.—Fellow Passengers.—Strategic change of Places at the Table with the amiable Ensign.—Satisfactory Result.—Miss C. Palmer.—Realization of my Brother's Prediction.—Auspicious Voyage.—Uninterrupted Enjoyment.—Lawyer S——.—His peculiarities.—Submission to young Wife.—Iniquitous Conspiracy against him.—Other Human Oddities.—Lawyer S——'s Shower Bath.—Private Theatricals.—The Major's Prologue.—Exhaustion of Tobacco.—Arrival in the Bay of Bengal.

At length the moment of departure arrived. Friends and relations took their leave amidst smiles and tears; my own dear brother descended into his boat, the anchor was raised, and the buoyant "Victory" hoisted sail, and swept outwards on her course.

The wind was fair, and the sea at first tolerably smooth; but undulation soon commenced. Mental sufferings gave way to physical discomfort, sympathy was displaced by sickness, and we neophytes saw little of one another for the succeeding four-and-twenty hours, which were occupied, at least by some, in

paying tribute to Neptune. When we did, however, meet, which was at the "witching hour" of dinner about the third day, we discovered, to our mutual satisfaction, that, although there were some absentees, we were a large and, as all, I fancy, considered, a pleasant-looking party.

There was Captain Farquharson, who commanded the ship, his wife, and brother, a young civilian; Mr. H. Palmer, with two unmarried sisters; Mr. C. Palmer, with his wife; Vernon Jillard, of the 16th Lancers, engaged to another sister in India. These formed in themselves a large party. Then there was Mrs. McNabb, mother of the present Mrs. John Walter, with a young friend under her charge; Miss Raikes, Miss Wrist, and Miss Diggle, unmarried damsels; an old gentleman, Captain Smith, with his young wife; Major O'Halloran, an Irish officer, with two young sisters; Colonel Anstruther; Lieutenants Eustace and Simpson; and, lastly, Pierce Taylor, companion of my cabin, a writer like myself, brother of the now well-known General Reynell Taylor, of Punjab renown, — the whole assemblage numbering twenty-two souls.

"Far, far upon the sea,
The good ship speeding free,
Upon the deck we gather, young and old;
And view the flapping sail
Spreading out before the gale,
Full and round, without a wrinkle or a fold."

It was not till about the fourth day that the whole party assembled, several of the ladies, and among them the Misses Palmer, having been unable to pre-

sent themselves before. When we took our places at the dinner-table, I found that, while the ladies of the Palmer party were placed at the top of the table in close proximity to the Captain, I, with the other juveniles of the inferior sex, was at the bottom; and that being on the same side of the table with Miss Charlotte Palmer, I could not catch even a glimpse of the countenance which had so struck my artist brother, and given rise to his prediction. Now, as I had been by no means an unimpassioned observer of the beauty which excited his admiration, I was far from satisfied with my position; and immediately endeavoured to exert that "ingenuity and artifice" which Mrs. Malaprop recommended to Sir Anthony Absolute as one of the principal qualifications to be instilled into the youthful mind. I accordingly induced an amiable young ensign, who was seated opposite, and who had no particular object to attract his gaze, to change places with me, and thus secured the happiness of an uninterrupted prospect of the face which had so enchanted us, throughout the entire passage.

If I were to attempt to describe the voyage, with its varied incidents, in detail, I should fill a volume, and should, perhaps, trench too far on the privileges of private companionship. Never, however, I verily believe, was there a more pleasant period spent on the broad seas; never more elements or occasions for fun and social jollity. To me, I need hardly say, the days were replete with enjoyment, the nights with happy thoughts; for I had within a few hours realized the predictions of my facetious or far-seeing friends,

and fallen desperately in love with the fair, I may truly say, the lovely, Miss Palmer.

But there were some specimens of human oddity at whom I may, not unreasonably, glance. There was a stout old gentleman returning to India, who was notorious for his devotion to games of chance, his skill at all such games, and his remarkable powers of calculation. He was nicknamed throughout the Presidency in which he lived, Lawyer S——. But he had in his declining years married a young and handsome wife, and *his* "little game" was over. She had extracted a pledge from him that he would never play a game of chance again. Chess alone was permitted; but to satisfy his calculating and arithmetical powers, she used to send him out of her cabin every morning, while engaged with her toilet, with a large slate, on which she had set down a most difficult sum; and the excellent and obedient husband might be seen, in demi-toilette, pacing up and down the steerage, slate in hand, his brow knit, and his lips moving, devoutly bent upon his task.

But this was not the only amusing incident of Lawyer S——'s life on board. His recreations being limited to chess, the energetic old gentleman had concentrated all his faculties on that game. He was a fair, and only a fair, player; about equal, perhaps a little more skilful, than myself and several others on board. In the enthusiastic enjoyment of this his only permitted amusement, he constantly challenged one or other of us; the depth of his absorption in the issue of each game caused universal amusement, and led some of us, I grieve to say, into an unholy

conspiracy against him. Charles Palmer, Pierce Taylor, and myself agreed to form a secret alliance, embracing sundry signs and sounds, which were to be employed for the warning or assistance of the one of us who happened to be playing with the enthusiast, and so to manage matters that throughout the whole voyage he should not win a single game.

This scheme was iniquitously carried out. The three heads were better than one; and as each player was nearly equal in his single capacity to the veteran antagonist, the victory was easily secured. Once or twice a conspirator was sore pressed, and then the plan settled was to remain in apparently deep contemplation without moving, till the old gentleman, who was as irritable as he was enthusiastic, would get up and walk away to the end of the saloon, saying, with his back turned, "Tell me when you are going to move!" Little did he gauge the wickedness of his rivals. His departure was a signal for flagitious deeds; for, before he returned, the position of the pieces had been altered—perhaps one of his pieces abstracted. In short, wickedness, as it generally does, flourished throughout the voyage. But the conspirators were not wholly bad. Before we parted we revealed to the dear old sufferer the whole organisation of the secret society; and his delight at discovering that he had not, as he imagined, been always honestly defeated in the intellectual contest, more than compensated for the supposed humiliation. No one laughed more heartily than himself over the trick, or questioned us with greater gusto over the particulars of our tactics.

One other inexcusable act I am tempted to relate, though of all the sin of the execution I must solely bear the blame.

Lawyer S—— was a burly, stout man, somewhat Falstaffian about the body and waist. He was fond of bathing; and, with his usual contemplative ingenuity, had devised a new and sensational mode of lavation. He would appear with the upper section of his person in a state of semi-nudity, the nether portion enveloped in that special description of Turkish trouser which in India we call "pyejâmehs." Thus attired, he would take up his position under the poop of the vessel, with his legs stretched out, while a sailor, standing above with several buckets, at a given signal, dashed the cold water violently over his head.

Anything more artistically delicious than this group it is difficult to conceive; and its frequent repetition was too much for a temperament painfully susceptible of the ridiculous, as I, unfortunately, am. My evil genius suggested an addition to the ceremony; and one morning, just as the performance was coming off, I went up to the poop, obtained a broom, and, standing by the side of the sailor who was to pour the water, just as the stream descended on Lawyer S——, scrubbed his head violently with the broom, and then rapidly moved aside to watch the effect of the manœuvre.

The attitude and expression of the old gentleman, the astonishment with which he put his hands to his head, and looked up with the water streaming over his face, the pose, the uncertainty, and the costume—the innocent countenance of the sailor, who had been

pledged to secrecy—this combination of mental and physical oddities formed a tableau of surpassing charm. Lawyer S—— never knew what had happened; but frequently spoke with admiration of the

force and rapidity with which the water had been dashed over him!

During the voyage I got up "The Rivals," in which Lawyer S—— distinguished himself as Bob Acres' country servant David. P. Taylor made an excellent Bob Acres, Colonel Anstruther was Mrs. Malaprop, and I myself took the part of Sir Anthony Absolute and Sir Lucius O'Trigger, changing my wig and coat as each character appeared on the stage. "The School for Scandal" followed, when P. Taylor was an admirable Lady Teazle to my Sir Peter; and the Lancer, in the character of Charles Surface, amused the audience by his impassioned toasting of Maria in the after-dinner scene, whom he called "Mawia."

There were many other eccentric characters on board, whose appearance, sayings, and doings would afford amusing subjects of portraiture; but I will only mention one or two more. There was Major ——, an Irish officer, kind-hearted and impulsive, but rather peculiar-looking; very tall and thin, with nothing broad about him but his accent. Two sisters were with him, interesting and ladylike girls, though too young to have attained full grace of figure.

The Major had many amiable qualities and an overbearing appetite. What specially amused us all was that he managed always at dinner to have two plates going, one on each side of the table; so that he had double rations. And this peculiarity was specially exhibited when one day, not far from the land, an unhappy half-starved snipe came on board, and was caught. This he had roasted and brought up at

dinner-time, when he carefully helped each of his sisters, who sat on either side of him, with a leg—something like a hairpin—and ate the rest of the bird himself.

On one occasion the dear good man caused great amusement. When we had decided on acting "The Rivals," I wanted a prologue, and asked the Major, among others, whether he could write one. At the moment he disclaimed all poetic powers; but the next day I saw him, as I passed his cabin after breakfast, busily engaged in writing something. This went on for a fortnight; and, as his cabin was exactly opposite mine, I had full opportunities for observation.

At the end of the fortnight he came up to me one day with a paper in his hand, saying, "Tayler, you asked me the other day if I could write a prologue. Faith! then I'm no poet at all, at all; but it struck me this morning that I might do something of the sort; so I've just jotted down these few lines, and, if they'll do, bedad, you're welcome to them!"

He then handed me an elaborate prologue, evidently the result of his fortnight's labour, with an excruciating bit of bad grammar in the fourth line. It began thus:—

> "Dame nature, ever wanton, seeks
> Variety in all her freaks.
> These strange vagaries of the jade
> Much metamorphose here HAS made."

The dodge was ludicrously transparent; but I thanked him cordially, and at once adopted the pro-

logue, looking forward to some additional fun in its production.

And I was not mistaken. It was committed to Captain Jillard, of the Lancers, to be spoken; and the author was unceasing in urging him to learn it perfectly, suggesting the right emphasis and expression for the different sentiments contained. As the day drew near his anxiety increased, and he seemed to be troubled with anticipations of failure; and his prevision was not far wrong. Captain Jillard, a most amiable and jolly fellow, was not exactly the person to learn his lesson perfectly; and he had one peculiarity, already noticed, viz., that he never pronounced his r's, but converted them into w's.

This had a bad effect at starting, especially in the second line, which was perverted into—

"Vawiety in all her fweaks!"

The poor Major stood with me behind the scenes during the repetition, and his agony was fearful to witness. The w's pained him; but when the Captain got further on, and broke down again and again, making a terrible hash of the little sense there was in the poem, my companion could hardly contain himself, and at one time was almost rushing on to the stage to rescue by violence his suffering verses.

Such were some of the amusing incidents of our life on board ship—happy, especially to me.

The whole voyage was one uninterrupted period of cheerfulness and geniality, untainted, save by one boyish dispute easily settled, by a single quarrel or contretemps. The only occasion on which coun-

tenances were gloomy and spirits depressed was near the close, when all the tobacco—even the quids of the sailors, which were greedily purchased—had been expended. "I alone, among them all," was still happy; for I never smoked. Once only in my boyhood I had made the attempt, in imitation of my seniors, but was so ill that I never ventured on the experiment again.

On this occasion I gloried in my isolation; but even the days of no tobacco will pass away, and our near approach to the end of the voyage, which everyone longed for, except myself, helped to restore equanimity to the smokeless world. And when we at last entered the "Bay of Bengal," faces were almost as smooth as the surface of the sea.

CHAPTER III.

ARRIVAL IN CALCUTTA.

Arrival in Calcutta.—The *Victory* anchors in the River.—The Palmer Party leave the Vessel for Mr. John Palmer s House on the Banks of the River.—The other Passengers remain on Board.—Musquitos.—Jackalls.—Ship weighs Anchor next Morning.—We are met by a Pinnace, containing John Elliott, George Battye, and others.—I am invited by Mr. Elliott to go to his House.—Arrival at the Ghât.—First Impressions of the "City of Palaces."—Partial Disappointment.—All leave the Vessel.—I go up in a Palankeen.—Engage an Indian Bearer (Doorjun) on my way.—Reach Mr. Elliott's House.—Retire to my Room.—Sad Reminiscences.—Letters from Friends and Relations received before leaving England.—Tiffin.—The Crow.

On the evening of the 29th October 1829 the gallant *Victory* cast anchor in the Hooghly, some little distance still from the Ghât, or landing-place of Calcutta, but well within the confines of "Garden Reach."

In two or three hours, a boat was seen approaching, and as it drew near, it was found to be a private

"bhauleah," with two of the Messrs. Palmer, brothers of the young ladies on board, who had come to take away their party; Mr. John Palmer's beautiful house was situated on the banks of the river, a short distance from the spot in which we were anchored.

The departure of so large a number of our fellow-passengers left a sad blank in our assembly, and, as it was too late for others to leave the ship, the rest of us remained on board, some retiring to their cabins, others sitting or reclining on deck, engaged in desultory conversation, recalling the incidents of the voyage, and speculating, more or less hopefully, on the unknown future before us. But we were not alone; as the night advanced, a subdued persistent hum assailed our ears, becoming gradually louder and more loud, and after a few minutes we were introduced to the musical society of the persevering and irrepressible mosquito, with whom some of us at least were destined to enjoy unpleasant intimacy hereafter.

The following lines will give my readers a vivid idea of these musical tormentors; they appeared in the *Englishman's Weekly Journal* in 1866:—

"I've heard folk sing that Indian clime
Possesses all that 's rare and nice;
In fact, 'tis, if you trust their rhyme,
A sort of earthly paradise:
Listen to the lay of one
Who can tell you if you please,
What it is to live alone,
Victim to mofussil creatur's—
Fed upon by fleas,
Eaten by 'Muskeeturs.'

"When all my daily work is o'er,
I sit and try my mind to clear,
With blackest pipe, and one—no more—
Imperial quart of Bass's beer;
In then they begin to come,
At first, perhaps, by twos and threes,
Make my best arm-chair their home.
Would my best friend know my featur's?
Fed upon by fleas,
Eaten by 'Muskeeturs.'

"I dare not now at croquet play,
I dare not go where Mary goes,
How can a fellow soft things say,
When conscious of a bottle nose?
No! I wander out at night,
Restless, broken, ill at ease.
Do they leave me then? Not quite!
Insects think there 's nought so sweet as
Me fed on by fleas,
Eaten by 'Muskeeturs.'

"The judge to dinner asks me out,
But how can I my dress togs put on,
With feet swelled up as if with gout,
And hands as big as legs of mutton?
Tho' the judge has fairish wine,
And his beer with me agrees—
Yet, alas, I must decline;
Not for me now such a treat is—
Fed upon by fleas,
Eaten by 'Muskeeturs.'

The mosquito has been so frequently described by different injured parties, who have suffered from the little creature's "reckless thirst for blood"—a quality which has lately been ascribed to myself—that I will not recapitulate exhausted metaphors. The best authority

on such subjects is, perhaps, the discomfited young lady who is rendered unfit for the enjoyment of the ball of which she had been dreaming, by the unfeeling deglutition of the "young blood" of her graceful ancles—and to her, or the exhausted "fat man," into whose curtains two or three of the more practised blood-suckers have cunningly penetrated—I confidently refer for a true portraiture of the buzzing tyrant.

Being myself charitably disposed towards a created being, who for carrying out its inevitable instincts becomes an object of universal detestation, I am glad to be able to ascribe one small meritorious attribute—though not, I fear, of much practical advantage—to the fleshy tyrant.

The derivation of the word "canopy" has for many years been a subject of doubt and difficulty to the learned etymologist—though possibly Mr. Gladstone may in his enthusiastic pursuit of "philology" have discovered its true root. The mosquito is at the bottom of it. *Konops* is the Greek for mosquito, and *Konopeion* a mosquito-net, the original canopy.

Hoping that the fly may appreciate and be grateful for a discovery which will introduce him into the august society of modern philologists, I wish him farewell for the present.

Not long afterwards, as if the animal world of the East was determined to present itself, with as little delay as possible, to our notice, we were suddenly saluted by a chorus of the most unearthly howlings, within a few yards of the ship; an "Ululatus" the loudest and most discordant that I ever heard, even during my long residence in India.

It was evidently a great meeting of jackals, assembled at some unusual feast; a Guildhall dinner on dead Hindoos, a chorus to be remembered, and which in the silence and darkness of the night partook of the diabolical.

THE JACKAL AT DINNER.

Next morning we weighed anchor, and sailed slowly up the Hooghly. As we passed Mr. John Palmer's house, nearly at the end of the "Reach," the sailors manned the yards and raised a hearty cheer in honour of the owner, a man respected and revered by all in Calcutta.

We saw, as we passed Mr. Palmer's house, the valued companions of our pleasant voyage standing in the verandah waving their handkerchiefs, and one attractive form at least was recognised by me. As we sailed up the river a pinnace met us, carrying several passengers, who had come purposely to meet the *Victory*; among them were Mr. G. Battye and the Hon. John Elliott, one of the most popular of Anglo-Indians, nephew of Lord Minto, and at that time Postmaster-General of Bengal. with the spirit of generous hospitality for which India was

then, and is still, to some extent, renowned (spite of reduction of salaries and rise of prices), Mr. Elliott invited me, though a stranger, to accompany my friend and cabin companion, Pierce Taylor, as a guest to his house, and as R. Farquharson, the brother of our captain, as well as Captain Farquharson himself and his wife, were also to be his guests, we formed a large party, and on reaching the Ghat and bidding farewell to our fellow-passengers, wended our way to his house in Chowringhee Road, some in Mr. Elliott's carriage, others, and myself among the number, in a palankeen, for the first time in our lives.

A curious incident happened to me on the way. A fat little man with a large turban and pleasant face ran along by the side of my palankeen, and in broken English offered himself as my "sirdar bearer" or head domestic servant. I read the letters he showed me, and liking his countenance, appearance, and manner, at once engaged him. I have got his portrait, but as I am warned to curtail the number of my illustrations, I reluctantly withhold it.

The character of this man afforded a striking specimen of the many good qualities which are frequently found, as I have since experienced, in the native of India, Hindoo and Mahomedan.

My little factotum "Doorjun," was simply a pattern; honesty, patience, devotion to his master's interests, general amiability and unswerving faithfulness were in him conspicuous. He lived with us for more than twenty years, and when he died I might truly say "I could have better spared a better man." Peace be to his manes.

I had in my early days heard little, and imagined less, of India. My father, who while living on his own estates was ruined by a dishonest agent, and subsequently entered the army, had died when I was four years old, leaving my mother a widow with seventeen children. My eldest brother, Archdale Wilson Tayler, had been there as chaplain for some years when I was a child, and returned, while I was yet a boy, to England, where shortly afterwards he obtained a living.

He subsequently became rector of Stoke Newington, but I saw too little of him to obtain any information of his Eastern experience. What, as children, we specially remarked on his return from India was his extreme politeness to the female sex.

He never could see a lady in room, garden, or passage, without offering his arm ; and I well remember one day, when he called upon a family with whom we were on terms of intimacy, the mischievous traps that were laid by some of the younger maidens of the party, not, I fear, without my complicity, with a view to encourage his chivalrous attentions ; such are the trifles which leave their impression on the youthful mind.

The excellence of his real character, his true, though unostentatious spirit of religion, amiability and unselfishness, were duly understood and appreciated in after years when, with his attached and intellectual wife, formerly Miss Heathfield, he had charge of our dear children during the many years of our enforced absence from England.

Another brother had gone out to India as a cadet in 1823.

He was an extraordinary character, and the name of

"Tom Tayler" was for many years afterwards notorious at Harrow. He formed, however, an intimate friendship with the young Duke of Dorset, who dying while yet at school, left him a handsome legacy, which, with Lord Clive's pension subsequently obtained, rendered him independent.

Tom Tayler's eccentricities were fabulous, and he injured all his prospects in life by incessant practical jokes, which though intensely amusing to the spectators, were injurious to him. He never wrote home to our mother for years after his departure for India, but suddenly one day, without the slightest warning, made his appearance in Hinde Street, were we then lived, and in answer to the general exclamation of astonishment, gravely said that the heat was so oppressive, and the mosquitos, so troublesome, he really could not stay in India!

In reality he had served throughout the first Burmese war, in which he was wounded.

His volatile character, after affording entertainment, if not anxiety, to his friends for many years, was before his death transformed into deep religious convictions which never left him while life lasted.

But all these incidents had long passed, and left no distinct impression of Indian life upon my mind.

Of Calcutta, and its grand appellation of "City of Palaces," I had of course frequently heard, and although I was not like the being described in the *Calcutta Review*, who "dreams of turbaned horsemen, glittering scimitars, and snorting Arabs," I certainly did look forward with pleasurable expectation to the sight of something romantic, if not exceptionally grand.

And I confess I was to some extent disappointed—"turbaned horsemen," "glittering scimitars," and all such oriental objects, I looked for in vain; not an Arab horse was to be seen, not the shadow of an elephant, not the scent of a tiger could be discovered.

In our passage up the river we certainly had seen handsome houses with flourishing gardens, and I had welcomed the palm-trees as giving a foretaste of the oriental scenery which I anticipated.

But on reaching the Ghat, or landing-place, all such visions vanished. There was crowded shipping, a fort, some handsome-looking mansions, a striking structure, called the Bishop's palace, on the opposite side of the river, and a noble building pointed out as the Government House; but this was the only real "palace" to be seen. The objects that immediately met the senses were fat baboos, shabby palankeens, creaking bullock-carts, break-down keranchees, one or two melancholy adjutants, a sprinkling of pariah dogs, crows in abundance, odours multifarious.

These were the objects around and before us; imagination was starved, romance yielded to reality, dreams and visions vanished into thin air.

The whole scene, in short, was disappointing, at least to me, probably because I had looked for something altogether different. What was noticeable was not, as I expected, Eastern, and had in it no tinge of romance; the houses, though large and handsome, were square and unadorned—no domes, or pillars, or arches to be seen.

The fact is, "orientalism" anglicised is prosaic; the brown semi-nude figures which might strike the sight, we had seen and become accustomed to the day before,

the rest of the human world were common-place and unimposing. The disappointment was my own fault: I had allowed imagination to feed itself without restraint or correction by study or research; I suffered accordingly.

Some of my readers may be interested in knowing the derivation of the word "Calcutta." It is in fact taken from the name of the wonderful goddess "Kali," the wife of Shiva, otherwise called "Doorgan"; but I shall in a future chapter give a full description, with a portrait of this interesting young lady, when I treat of the Thugs, those amiable individuals who gain their livelihood by strangling their fellow-creatures, and who do all under the special patronage of Kali.

There is a celebrated temple a few miles from Calcutta, at a place called "Kali-Ghat," dedicated to this deity, and it is from this that, by a slight metamorphose of letters, the name of Calcutta is derived.

When fairly under my kind host's hospitable roof, I was shown into a room to cleanse and purify myself from all nautical disfigurements, and prepare for my Indian meal, which under the denomination of "tiffin" (luncheon) was announced as speedily to be served.

And while here sitting down for the first time since I left England, in solitude and quiet, after the many months of incessant excitement, and with the echo of the sound of many voices in my ear, my memory suddenly reverted to the dear home and its belongings, which I had left now some thousand of miles away.

The image of my beloved mother, beautiful though in age, my numerous brothers and sisters of whom I, the seventeenth in number, was the youngest; my relations

and many friends, especially the large family of the Blencowes, with whom I had lived almost as much as in my own home.

The vision and reminiscence of all these entered my head and heart, and though full of hopeful anticipations and pleasurable impressions of our late voyage, and the new friends I had made, sadness for the moment came o'er the spirit of my dream, and the present was overshadowed by the past; even at this distance of time it is no slight pleasure to recall all the images of the days gone by, and while indulging in the remembrance, I am tempted to place on record two or three of the farewell tokens of love, received on the eve of my departure, love unfelt for a time, but not lost for ever.

I had found time before I left England to see and personally to wish farewell to all my near relatives and special friends. One of my dear sisters, however, was too far off to admit of my seeing her, she therefore wrote the following affectionate and touching letter, which she sent with one also from her excellent husband; she was married to the Rev. Francis Hodgson, the vicar of Bakewell, and subsequently provost of Eton, a man well-known in the learned and literary world.

In the life of Francis Hodgson, lately published, I find the following passage referring to the marriage of my sister, in which Lord Byron and Dr. Drury took great interest:—

"In October 1813, Byron, Drury, and Hodgson went together in a postchaise to Oxford, where Byron had an interview with Mrs. Tayler" (my mother), "who was on a visit to her brother, Dr. Hall, the Dean of Christ Church.

"The result of this interview was the removal of all objection to the intended marriage, which, however, did not take place until the beginning of the next year but one."

After the death of my sister, Mr. Hodgson left Bakewell, and years afterwards married a daughter of Lord Denman, whose nephew wrote the biography from which this passage is quoted.

The following is my sister's letter:—

"June 8th, 1830.

"My dearest William,

"As it is impossible for us to meet again before you leave England, I am forced to take leave of you with my pen only; but be assured while I do so, that *with my heart* I embrace you as warmly as any of the affectionate relations by whom you are surrounded.

"It was very good of you to wish to come and see us, and I shall always think of this with pleasure. I send you a letter-case, the most *un toujours* thing I could find in any of the Bakewell shops.

"I send also with it a little book which will be dear indeed to you, as you will see directly you open it. *The Diary of an Invalid*, we hope, will help to amuse you on your voyage.

"It was a great pleasure to me to hear of your taking my dear mother out in a little carriage; it must have done her much good.

"Thank God, you leave her in tolerable health, though I am afraid much fatigued and harassed just at present, and not much better for the thought of parting with you. But it must be very consoling to you, my dear William, to think that you have never been anything but a comfort to her, and may God bless you for it. To have gained entire independence at an early age, and in a manner so very honourable to yourself, is no trifling reward.

"And now God Almighty bless you, my dear William. If you can find time to send me a few lines before you go, I shall value

them very much; but however this may be, take with you a very large portion of my affection, and my earnest prayers for your health and comfort while you are absent from us, and the happiness of seeing you among us again in a few years.

"Heaven grant this.

"I am ever your very affectionate sister,

"MATILDA HODGSON.

"P.S.—I was just lamenting to myself over my unsatisfactory letter, when dear Mr. Hodgson brings me in one which expresses all I wish. Sarah sends you her best wishes and regards."

Letter from Mr. Hodgson.

"Vicarage, Bakewell,
"June 8th, 1829.

"MY DEAR WILLIAM,

"It would, of course, have been a much more gratifying thing to your sister and myself if we could have bid you farewell in either Bakewell or in London, but as this seems impossible, all we can do is first to offer our earnest prayers for your best happiness, both in mind and body; and, secondly, to express our affectionate wishes for the same results to your arduous undertaking.

"Herewith you will receive some imperfect testimonies of our regards and love; but we could send you nothing more valuable than these poor gifts, or warmer than what they signify.

"Having executed my commissions, I have only to add my most hearty congratulations on your early attainment of such honourable independence. Behold the rewards of good principle and energy; may it please God for ever to enable you to preserve these first of human attainments, and you may then reasonably indulge the hope of return to your native land, full of honours, and in that happiest of all situations, the situation in which you may benefit and bless all who are nearest and dearest to you.

"God bless you, my dear William, and always remember me, your affectionate brother,

"F. HODGSON."

One other short letter, from one whom I always regarded as a second mother, I am proud to give; Mr. and Mrs. Blencowe, with their large family of three sons and eight daughters, had lived for years in a large house at Hayes, in Middlesex, and as the younger son was a schoolfellow with me at the Charter-House, and my own elder brothers were absent from home, I generally spent my holidays with them, and from constant intercourse I was regarded by the parents almost as a son, and by the daughters as a brother.

I had gone to Brighton, where at the time of my departure for India Mrs. Blencowe with her unmarried daughters was staying, and where one of my brothers was officiating as chaplain, but on the next morning, when the hour for taking leave arrived, the following little note was put into my hand, a touching proof of true affection which I never forgot:—

"To say adieu to one I love so dearly is painful to me, therefore to avoid it I am gone out. Every blessing attend you.

"Yours most affectionately,

"P. Blencowe."

Some years afterwards, in 1840, when I visited the Cape of Good Hope, I unexpectedly met the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Blencowe, who had married Sir George Napier, the governor, and since I have returned home I have had the great pleasure of seeing the surviving daughters.

Of my own sixteen brothers and sisters, alas! one only is now living—my brother Frederick, whom I mentioned in the first chapter of this book.

Such were the half-pleasant, half-painful reminiscences

which occupied my mind during the first undisturbed minutes which I passed in my quiet room.

But the irrepressible present was now before me, the past was as a dream; as I rose from my chair the reality of my position was forcibly brought to my mind, and I recognised the fact that I was in India, thousands of miles from home, that I was in a strange though hospitable house, and that "tiffin" was coming.

I looked out of the window, and an unmistakably comic scene was exhibited, in which the principal actors were not men, women, children, or goblins, but, strange to say, a biped generally regarded as uninteresting and offensive, but which in India is a character well worthy of notice if not admiration, viz.—the *crow*.

As this creature will present himself more than once in the course of this narrative to the observation and amusement of the reader, he is worthy of a separate chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CROW.

Remarks on my own Character.—Inconsistency.—Irrepressible Love of the Comic united to a painful Sensitiveness to the Pathetic.—Amusing Instance of my Weakness as exhibited in the Great Simla Trial.—Quotation from the Calcutta Press.—Irish Letter.—The Crow Scene from John Elliott's Window.—The Character of the Bird.—Its Inquisitiveness and Intelligence.—Various Instances as shown in Sketches.—Anecdotes.—Quotations from other Books.—O. Trevelyan's *Life of T. B. Macaulay*.—Letter to the *Daily Telegraph* by the Rev. E. Cox.—Curious Quotations from Ancient Hindoo Works.—Mention of the Crow in the Sacred Scriptures.—Humorous Description by Mark Twain.—Quotations from Phil Robinson's *My Indian Garden*.

In devoting the present chapter to the delineation of the peculiarities of the Indian crow, I would wish to disarm any hostile criticism which the choice of such a subject might possibly excite, by a few remarks on certain peculiarities in my own character, which I may be pardoned for mentioning.

The first of these peculiarities, then, and one which has exercised a marked influence on my career (as will

be seen in subsequent chapters) is the uncontrollable propensity to discover in almost all events the elements of the comic, and this to an extent and under circumstances which might lead the casual observer to attribute to me an absence of all serious and earnest conviction, and sometimes, possibly, a want of sympathy and kindly feeling. Now, a mere personal disavowal of such defects may or may not be accepted, but there is another characteristic in my disposition, familiar to all who know me, which, while it is peculiar in itself, affords the best contradiction to such an unpleasant view of my disposition, and that is, an extreme, a ludicrous, I may almost say an idiotic sensitiveness, which, even among my children and grandchildren is a subject of surprise and sometimes of amusement ; suffering from this peculiarity I am unable to read a book, or hear a story, or witness a play which contains any elements of sadness or distress, without making a great fool of myself, and distressing all who are with me.

I am induced to offer this little egotistical explanation (an autobiography must be egotistical) that this irresistible love of the comic—which in the course of my career so frequently led to caricatures either of pen or pencil, satirical criticisms, or half-concealed ridicule, and which at times excited the displeasure of certain "grave and reverend seniors," and brought down upon me the censure of offended officialism—may not be attributed to hardness of heart, coldness of feeling, or absence of sympathy.

Smiles and tears are generally symbols of opposite sensations, but it is also true that "there is one step from the sublime to the ridiculous."

An amusing instance of this unseasonable weakness occurred some years ago, on a somewhat sensational occasion.

During the progress of a celebrated court-martial which caused a great excitement at Simla in 1866, I was engaged, in my new capacity as law agent, to defend the prisoner, and at the close of the proceedings it was my privilege to read before the Court an elaborate address which I had written.

The greater part of this address was occupied by argument on the several points of law involved, but just at the close I had added a somewhat pathetic appeal to the Court, reminding them that the whole future career and prospects of the prisoner, then a young man, were in their hands, with sundry other touching suggestions.

As the time approached for reading this address I began to feel that I should in all probability make a fool of myself. I accordingly spoke to an officer sitting next to me, confessed my weakness, and asked him if I might, on being conscious of a breakdown, invent some excuse, and ask permission for him to read the closing passages.

He kindly consented, and it was lucky he did; my prediction was verified, and, as arranged, I hemmed and coughed hypocritically, and obtained permission for my neighbour to take my place.

Absurd as was this puerile weakness, it became more so, to those at least who were not behind the scenes, when the principal Calcutta paper came out with a leading article which said at the close, after describing the scene, "We always knew that Mr. Tayler was a

great actor, but we never witnessed so consummate a piece of dramatic skill as was then exhibited." And the next day an Irishman wrote in another paper a most amusing letter on the same subject, from which I am tempted to give the following extract :—

"Och Sir,

"Sure it would ha' done your heart and liver good to hear 'the tailor' read the defence (I'm tould that it wasn't quite according to Cocker for him to read it at all, at all, but these layers are the divil for working out their own ends). It was grand! and at one time the little gintleman worked himself up to such a pitch of nervosity by the pictur of misery he painted inside his own head, that his feelings overpowered his powers of spache and he bruk down.

"It was a pitiful sight, and the coort was moved to such a state of feeling that everybody expected the white-headed leader to get up perlitely and offer the spaker a glass of Innisshawn, nate; and sure it would ha been the gintlemanly thing to do.

"After onct breaking down of coorse the little gintleman couldn't put himself in trim again for spaking, so somebody else, a brother officer of the captain, had to finish reading the paper, and very well he did it, seeing that he gets nothing for the work, which the lawyer does.

"I am tould, for I don't know of my own experience, that the little gintleman (the consulter) is a famous actor, and that he can cry and laugh with the best of 'em, for all the world so like nature, that even his pocket-handkerchief is desaved into the belafe that tears is comin into his eyes; small wonder then that the coort, and particklarly the ould gintleman of it, was inclined to pipe too."

But to return to my subject. I have already mentioned the partial disappointment with which I had viewed the semi-oriental scene on my arrival in Calcutta, and my readers will probaby attribute my selection of the following objects for description to the comical

propensity which I have above admitted. But I do not think they will be without interest.

Just opposite my window, where the kitchen and other offices were situated, I perceived a group of fifteen or twenty crows, some perched on the roof, some on the edge of the building, several on the ground, one or two slowly hopping, and others taking convulsive and short flights.

It was a busy and engrossing moment, and the object of eager attention was evidently the "tiffin" under preparation in the kitchen. The crows of course knew it, as they always do know what is likely to benefit them. They all seemed to have their allotted parts, and appropriate attitudes; those on the ground with their heads forward, evidently watching the operations inside, and ready at any moment to take short rapid flights in case of danger; those on the ledge of the kitchen roof leaned over with heads perked on one side, listening and endeavouring to peer in from above; those at a greater distance still seemed to be calculating the interval, and preparing for a distant dash. All were cram-full of intelligent preparation and purpose.

At last there was a grand stir. A khidmutgar * emerged from the kitchen with a covered dish. All were in the air in a moment; all hovered round as the man crossed the yard, some almost touching his head, and quite equal to helping themselves out of the dish, if it had been unprotected. In another minute a second man

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* Table servant.

followed, with a dish uncovered; the excitement then became intense, and had not a watchful companion been close behind, the leg of mutton in it would have lost no little of its substance.

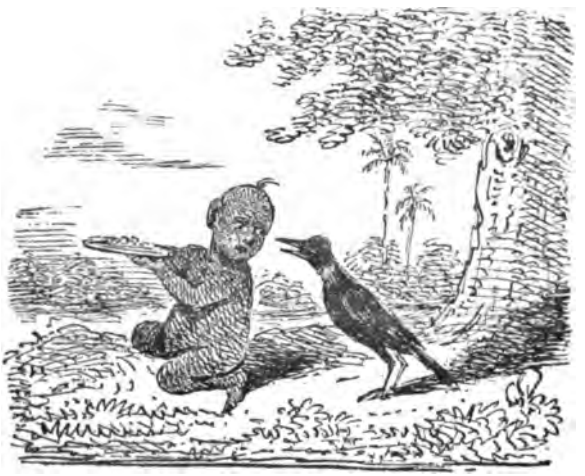
When they found themselves foiled they retired in apparently undisturbed humour, and satisfied themselves with some scraps which were thrown out of the kitchen door.

This curious scene—the intelligence united with self-restraint, the cunning looks and quiet motion of the

birds—greatly interested me, and I am free to confess that I thought more of these than all the sights I had yet seen, and the all-pervading *Corvus Bengalensis* was henceforth booked as one of the facts to be observed.

The Indian crow is, in fact, an institution; he pervades every department of society, from the palace to the hut; his love for man's companionship, the restless inquisitiveness of his mind, and the sympathetic interest which he appears to take in the arrangements, pursuits, and purposes of the human being with whom he may be said to associate, give him a distinctive, if not an entirely exceptional character.

If a little brown baby of six months old is squatted



down in the mud, left by its mother to shift for itself, one or two busy crows, with curious and patronising

looks, are sure to remain near it, hopping round and peering into its face, but never doing harm to the infant.

Sometimes, indeed, a stronger feeling than curiosity tempts him to disregard the difference of *meum* and *tuum*, and leads to unauthorised interference with the infant's property, but his peculations even then are conducted with a certain considerate abstemiousness which is quite foreign to the mind of the human thief.

Has a boy of more advanced years come to grief—perhaps dropped his basket—while his mother, unheed-

ing the accident, has walked before him, there is the irrepressible "corvus" clearly cognizant of the event, and while looking out for any possible contents which may be useful to himself, is ready to respond to the sufferer's call of Ma! Ma! by the sympathising Ca! Ca! And the presence of an older child is no efficient

protection, as the persistent crow will still exhibit his interest in the infant, though in its nurse's arms.

The peculiar attributes of the Indian crow did not escape the notice of Mr. Macaulay when in India. Mr. O. Trevelyan, in his interesting life of that statesman, writes of him :

"Regularly every morning his studies were broken in upon by the arrival of his baby niece, who came to feed the crows with the toast which accompanied his early cup of tea, a ceremony during which he had much ado to protect the child from the advance of a

multitude of birds, each almost as big as herself, which fluttered around her as she stood on the steps of the verandah."

But I never witnessed a more striking instance of this bird's calculating intrusiveness than I did many years afterwards, in Cuttack, on an occasion when my wife, after severe illness, was lying on her couch, convalescent, but weak. One of the doors of her room was opened to admit the air, when a choice party of crows quietly entered from the verandah with cautious and hesitating hops, and commenced helping themselves to some of the delicacies there placed, utterly regardless of the threatening gestures of the invalid and one of our little girls, who was in the room, the unreality of which they perfectly understood; directly, however, our little boy came in, and made a genuine attempt with a real stick, they at once vanished. A picture of this will be given in a future chapter.

In short, whenever man, woman, or child are sufficiently at rest, or engaged in occupations of sufficient interest to the ornithological mind, the crow is present, abrupt sometimes, and always inquisitive, but seldom rampant or antagonistic.

The following sketch, taken on the course, *i.e.* the "Rotten Row" of Calcutta, represents a scene specially attractive, from its peculiarity, to the inquiring corvine mind.

A coolie,* overcome with fatigue, had settled himself, as depicted, inside his basket, where he was complacently

* Common labourer.

snoring, undisturbed by the crowds of carriages, equestrians, and foot-passengers who were passing to and fro. An oriental "Diogenes," who, if he had not been "Bukshee Das," would, perhaps, have consented to be Governor-General of India.

The lowly basket and sound sleep of the coolie reminded one of King Henry's soliloquy :—

> "Why rather, sleep, ly'st thou in smoky cribs,
> Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee?
> * * * *
> Then happy low lie down.
> Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

The crows are evidently asking one another what the strange attitude means; one examines his head, the other his foot, and all three seem anxious for the sleeper's safety!

But the crow never enjoys himself more than when looking on at a game of romps, in which the actors are young and innocent.

It is a curious fact—but one which has confirmed me in the justice of my selection of the crow as one, at least, of the celebrities of Calcutta—that since the circumstance has been known, there is scarcely a friend who has not had some amusing anecdote to relate regarding him.

A choice instance of this interesting biped's achievements is to be read in a clever little work recently published by a young Bengal civilian, which I am here tempted to repeat :—

"One day, a Cashmerian woman was found by a magistrate, lying on the ground, and weltering in her blood.

"On coming close to her, he perceived that her nose had just been cut off by her husband (the usual process when green-eyed jealousy incites). A doctor was called. He examined the woman and the nose which was lying on the ground, and expressed his confidence that it could be reunited to her face. The nose was then given by the magistrate to a native Mehtur (low-caste man) to wash. He put it down for a moment and turned his back!

"Alas for this mutilated wife! A crow, which had been an unregarded spectator of the scene, seized the opportunity, and in that moment pounced down and carried off the bleeding nose in triumph!—a tit bit, an unexpected feast for the watchful bird and his family!"

Many and various are the records of this bird's eccentric proceedings, and I always feel that he himself regards me as a friend, and sympathises with me in the love for the ridiculous. Dr. Smith, our excellent clergyman at Boulogne, where I commenced this work, and who had passed many years in India, tells me that a crow once actually built its nest on the top of the weather-cock of a church in Calcutta, in which he was then performing service! An interesting little book, *Natural History, Sport, and Travel*, lately published by my son-in-law, Mr. E. Lockwood, also gives the following characteristic instance of corvine intelligence. He writes:—"The crows were great protectors of an aviary which I had made in my house, for a pair of shikra hawks would often come and siton a casuarina, a tree close by, watching the birds in the cage with longing eyes, and occasionally, when the coast was clear, swoop down at them; but they never could remain there long,

for the crows, which regarded my garden as their own property, persecuted them so vigorously that they were always forced to retreat."

On one occasion, I witnessed a deliberate struggle between human and corvine intellect, in which my interesting friends were the sufferers.

It is a process which very few have witnessed, and though the *man* in the end was victorious, it was only by the exercise of incessant perseverance and profound deceit.

A description and picture of this will be given in my second volume, when treating of my residence at Arrah, the station at which I witnessed the scene.

Meanwhile, I am tempted to quote the following letter which appeared, a short time ago, in the columns of a leading journal, as the facts open up another phenomenon in connection with the intellectual faculties of my hero, and tend to justify my selection :—

"RAVENS AND ROOKS.

"To the Editor of the *Daily Telegraph*.

"SIR,

"Referring to your article to-day as to a raven trial in Switzerland, I am reminded of having, between fifty and sixty years ago, witnessed a similar event with rooks. On a sultry summer afternoon I was riding leisurely on horseback along a quiet road in Norfolk, not many miles distant from Norwich, when I was startled by hearing an unusual commotion within a short distance amongst the dwellers of an adjacent rookery. Quietly tying up my horse to a gate, I crawled some hundred feet or more to a gap in the hedge of a grass field, where a rook "trial by jury" was going on. The criminal, as undoubtedly he was, at first appeared very perky and jaunty, although

encircled by about forty or fifty of an evidently indignant sable fraternity, and assailed by the incessantly vehement cawing of an outer ring, consisting of many hundreds, each and all showing even greater indignation than was manifested by the more select number. Some crime or other had evidently been committed against rook-law. Scouts, too were hovering in all directions, but so absorbed were they that my vicinity was unheeded. After a very few minutes the manner of the criminal suddenly and wholly changed. He bent his head, cawed weakly, as it were imploringly, and drooped his wings, as if pleading for mercy. It was useless. The select circle went in at once, and, picking him to pieces, left a mangled carcase in less time than I write of it. Then they and all the rest, scouts as well, set up a sort of exulting screaming and flew away, some to their neighbouring home, and others—the greater number I may say—across the fields. On picking up 'the remains' I found a shapeless mass, but was able to discern that it was a male bird.

"I am, Sir, faithfully yours,

"J. EDMUND COX, D.D.

"Athenæum Club,
"August 18th, 1880."

As I have written so much on the subject of this interesting biped, whose names, "crow," "crawe," "kraha," "kraagen," κραζω, and many other such croaking sounds, pervade all languages, I must not omit to refer in a few words to the early period of his existence, and point to the important position which many centuries ago he occupied, both in Asiatic and European annals.

My readers will probably be surprised to hear that at some painfully remote period, long before the present world was created, the *crow* was able to boast of his antiquity prior even to the almighty "Brahma," as the following quotation will show:—

"Brahma commanded that witnesses should be heard, and first he called upon the crow. But the crow was busy with her devotion, and cried, 'Who art thou that callest me?' 'It is I, Brahma, the master of the Vedas, and dost thou, poor carrion bird, dare to despise my summons?' Then said the ancient crow, 'Which Brahma art thou? I have seen a thousand Brahmas live and die. There was he with a thousand faces, whose existence was as a period of five days to me. Thou wast born but yesterday from the body of Vishnu, and commandest thou me?' Then Brahma entreated the crow, and she declared it was Indradyumna that had built the temple."

Again, we read that a crow was rocking itself on a tree—on some solemn occasion—when "suddenly taking a glorious form, it soared into the heaven of Vishnu."

The above quotations are taken from Dr. Hunter's admirable work on Indian statistics, and, if we believe them, would give us rather an ennobled idea of our black friend.

Passing over these absurd legends, however, which are calculated to exhibit the incredible extent of superstitious idiotcy, it is curious to observe the frequent mention that is made of the raven in scripture.

I need hardly remind my readers that the raven—which is a species of crow, called by zoologists (*corvus coras*)—though declared by the Levitical law to be "unclean," was the bird selected to feed Elijah at the brook Cherith, as related in the 17th chapter of the 1st of Kings.

Without venturing on the speculations which have

been offered by some writers on the apparent inconsistency involved by this employment of an animal pronounced "unclean," and "not to be touched," on a mission of divine charity, I may, without presumption, point to the frequent mention of the bird in Scripture as investing it with peculiar interest, and rendering its habits and peculiarities worthy of more than ordinary notice. No other bird, in fact, is so frequently mentioned.

That the parent birds neglect their young is an idea suggested by the following passages :—

Job xxxviii. 41: "Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat." And again, in Psalms clxvii. 9: "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry." While the peculiar savageness of its nature is intimated in Proverbs by the reference to its habits of attacking the eyes of its antagonists, Proverbs xxx. 17: "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

Whether this neglect of their young is the habit at this day, I cannot say, but the custom of attacking the eyes of its prey is undoubted.

Some writers have discovered a hidden meaning in the fact that the raven was the first bird sent out of the ark, when the waters of the flood were subsiding; and have attributed the circumstance of his not returning, to the foulness of his character, which induced him to prefer the desolateness of the scene without to the comfort of the ark; and they have thereby drawn the conclusion that he was a type of Satan, while the dove which returned was a symbol of Our Saviour.

But I confess I regard this as somewhat overdrawn, inasmuch as the natural habits of the two birds are quite sufficient to account for their movements. The raven feeds on carrion, and probably found food suited to his taste on the partial subsidence of the waters. The dove eats grain, of which there could have been none at that time.

My readers will doubtless remember in the Song of Solomon the complimentary comparison with the raven's hair:

"His locks are bushy, and black as the raven."

Mark Twain, like so many others, has helped to immortalise this strange bird, moved by its inquisitive and intelligent manner. The following is a passage from *The Tramp*.

After a graphic and witty description of a raven, which to all appearance was taking special notice of him, and, after a short parley, summoned another to aid in observing him, with the apparent desire to tempt him to communication—a scene most cleverly described, and almost warranted, as I have before pointed out, by the bird's extraordinary intelligence—he continues:

"I still made no reply. Now the adversary raised his head and called. There was an answering croak from a little distance in the wood, evidently a croak of enquiry, The adversary explained with enthusiasm, and the other raven dropped everything and came. The two sat side by side on the limb, and discussed me as freely and offensively as two great naturalists might discuss a new kind of bug. The thing became more and more embarrassing. They called in another friend. This was

too much. I saw that they had the advantage of me, and so I concluded to get out of the scrape by walking out of it. They enjoyed my defeat as much as any low white people could have done. They craned their necks and laughed at me (for a raven *can* laugh just like a man), they squalled insulting remarks after me as long as they could see me. They were nothing but ravens—I knew that what they thought about me could be a matter of no consequence—and yet when even a raven shouts after you—What a hat! O, pull down your vest! and that sort of thing, it hurts you and humiliates you, and there is no getting around it with fine reasoning arguments."

The crow has also found a place in the clever and eccentric little work, *In my Indian Garden*, written by Mr. Phil. Robinson, and published by Mr. Edwin Arnold in 1878; in that the bird is dignified with the title of *Splendens*—which the author says is the scientific name given him by Viellot. Mr. Robinson's description of the bird is not quite so flattering as mine—for it is "all black"—leaving no room even for the little interval of grey which softens the neck of the Indian species; but I shall hope that impartial inquiry will justify my more favourable portrait, and that *Corvus Bengalensis*, may, on further careful investigation, be found to possess at least a moderate mixture of good and evil. Reverenced by the great Brahma fifty thousand years ago, entrusted in times long past with a divine and miraculous mission, intelligent, as it undoubtedly is, above most of the feathered tribes, amiably considerate, as I have shown him to be, towards his infant companions, and held up by the great Indian

lawyer Menu (whom Mr. Robinson quotes) as the model for a wife,—we may, I think, deprecate the name and title of "Devil," and "inventor of mischief," and accept him as depicted by the nursery rhyme—a happy combination of joy and grief.

"One of sorrow,
Two of mirth;
Three a wedding,
Four a birth.'

CHAPTER V.

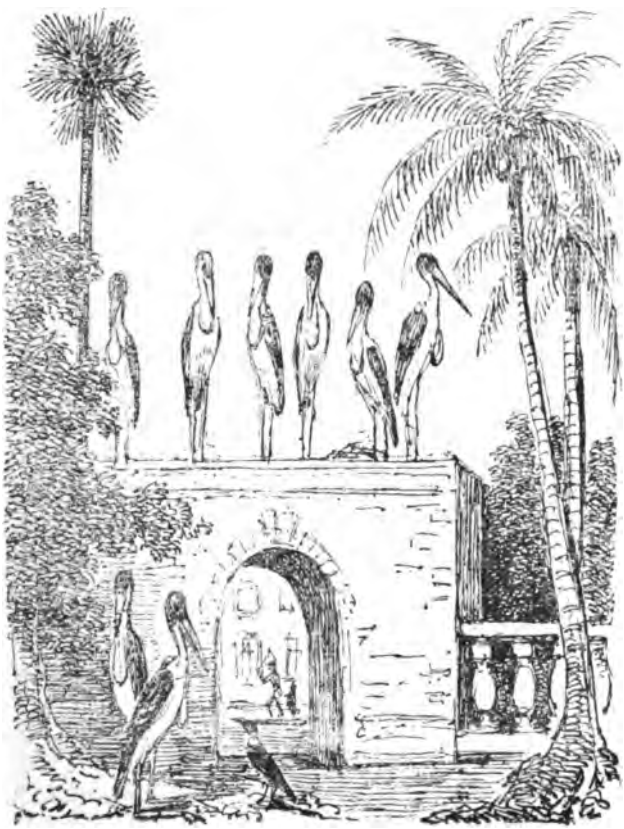
NOTABILITIES OF CALCUTTA.

The Adjutant.—Name and Characteristic.—Cruel Treatment in former Days.—My Tragic Adventure with one of them in Camac Street.—Narrow Escape of Old Lady.—Adjutant and Infantry.—The Keranchee.—Called by Bishop Heber the "Ghost of a Hackney Coach."—Derivation of Name. — General Champigny. — The "Boxwala." — Character. — Profession.—Dialogue with Lady.—The "Tattoo."—Description.—Character.—Peculiarities.—Endurance and Breed.—Sundry Occupations.—Latter Days.—"In Extremis."—Crow in Anticipation.

ALTHOUGH I have, without any hesitation or qualms of conscience, given the palm to "Monsieur Corbeau" (*Corvus Bengalensis*) as *facile princeps* among the interesting notabilities of India, there are other objects well worthy of passing remark. Among these may safely be mentioned the "adjutant." The native name of this remarkable bird is, properly pronounced, "hur-gila," or bone-swallower; but in the scientific glossary it has been converted into "argala," the name by which it is commonly known in India. How he obtained the more

familiar appellation of "adjutant" I have not yet ascertained, but perhaps the adjoining sketch may suggest the origin.

The practice at times of standing in rows, with the exactitude of military discipline, especially when anything is going on that attracts their attention and excites their gastric aspirations, at times gives them the appearance of a detachment of well-drilled soldiers.



His military connection with "infantry" will be seen below.

The bird belongs to the genus *Ciconia*, and is often confounded with the "maribou," or African crane.

I do not observe in the usual description of this bird any mention of the power which it possesses of elongating and contracting the pouch which hangs from its neck, a peculiar and eccentric characteristic.

The manner and bearing of the "adjutant," and the whole tenor of its daily life, is remarkable. The calm majestic dignity of its aspect and attitude, when undisturbed by any exciting incident, is worthy of imitation by archbishop, judge, or emperor. For hours together,

if not for the entire day, he remains perched on arch or wall, sometimes alone in solitary grandeur, at others, when there is special attraction, as on the wall of the Calcutta burial-ground, attended by a host of companions; sometimes standing on two legs, sometimes only on one, and sometimes squatting like a native, his small eye occasionally blinking, and his head at intervals slightly turned aside; otherwise motionless, undisturbed by passing events, indifferent alike to rain and sunshine; the model of philosophic calm and impassive self-content.

In former times, when the Calcutta police were less active than now, the unhappy adjutants were not unfrequently the victims of unfeeling sailors or mischief-loving boys.

The habit of seizing at one swoop and immediately swallowing any large bone or lump of flesh, which has given the name, suggested to some ingenious trickster the ludicrous though cruel idea of throwing down two bones covered with attractive remains of flesh, at a small distance from each other, but united with a strong cord a few feet in length; the effect was obvious, and, to all but the unhappy bone-swallower himself, enchanting.

Rising simultaneously with the bones irrecoverably gulped down, the unhappy birds found themselves united by the intervening cord, without the possibility of relief. What were their feelings it would be difficult to say, but the agonising contortions, the helpless condition of the weaker bird while being dragged *nolens volens* through the air by his more powerful brother, and the final catastrophe, which generally ended in reluctant but

rapid descent to *terra firma*, and the rude interference of their tormentors or other compassionate spectators,—all these irrepressible vagaries formed a spectacle amusing to the unfeeling, but not pleasant to the unhappy birds. Like turkeys, chameleons, and sensitive young ladies, however, the adjutant can, on special occasions, change colour, calling up at times a mantling blush into the neck, and at other times assuming a very disagreeable and unseemly brown. When movement becomes imperative he can never rise to the wing at once, but is obliged to take a sort of "hop, skip, and jump," as a preliminary to the ascent, and always turns his face to the wind when it rains, and shortens the neck.

With one of these grave and stately birds I was once, by my own fault, most painfully associated. While living in Camac Street in 1831, just after our first return from Cuttack, I was assailed by, and, I am ashamed to say, yielded to a sad temptation. Exactly opposite to the windows of one of our sitting-rooms was an outlying roof, belonging to one of the neighbouring houses, and on this roof, with a pertinacity which was infinitely provoking, though a little ridiculous, an ancient adjutant day by day, at a particular hour in the morning, took up his position, serenely standing, generally on one leg, the other being raised in the most illogical and unmeaning elevation, the bird himself being in attitude, expression, and bearing, save only when he changed his legs, immovable as a statue.

After some few days of patient endurance, my evil genius got the better of me. Unfortunately I possessed a bow and arrow, not of very formidable dimensions, but sufficient to cause very unpleasant sensations to a

living body who might be reached by the missive. On one inauspicious morning, I entered the room; the window was open; the ancient of days was there—had been there probably all night; I yielded to an indescribable impetus, placed the arrow on the string, and pulled! The good angel of the bird protected him, the grave head gave a gentle movement, the eye appeared to wink mildly, but to the relief of my better nature, the venerable biped was unhurt. The arrow, missing the bird, passed innocuously beyond—and entered the open window of an opposite house!

Now it happened that in that very room was an old lady of high degree, clothed in a rather shabby white dressing-gown. She was standing very near the window, superintending the rubbing-down of a highly prized mahogany table. My eye followed the arrow as it sped

past the unoffending adjutant, and I at once, with a cold shudder, realised the position! The old lady's figure was clearly visible in the recess of the open window. Dreadful to behold! horror of horrors! the arrow entered the room, whizzed close by her, and buried its head in the wall! My feelings may be better imagined than described. I returned like a guilty being, made an internal vow never again to shoot at an unoffending adjutant, and awaited the result.

A few hours afterwards came a stern and serious letter from a member of the Council, the Honourable W. Blunt, couched in just reprobation of my reprehensible conduct.

I, of course, humbly apologised, and there the matter ended; but the vision of the old lady and adjutant, with the horrible catastrophe so narrowly escaped, was for many days present to my mind.

One more peculiar object, though inanimate, deserves mention, viz. the old Indian hackney coach, now obsolete. The "keranchee," as it is called, is an indescribable vehicle, a cross between a dilapidated jarvey of olden time and a Bengal hackery, having the body of the one and the heavy yoke of the other—a vehicle which Bishop Heber pithily described as the "ghost of a hackney coach."

And "ghost" verily it has now become, for as civilisation has advanced, and the importance of rapid locomotives has been recognised, its slow and creaking faculties have been found unsuited to the requirements of young India.

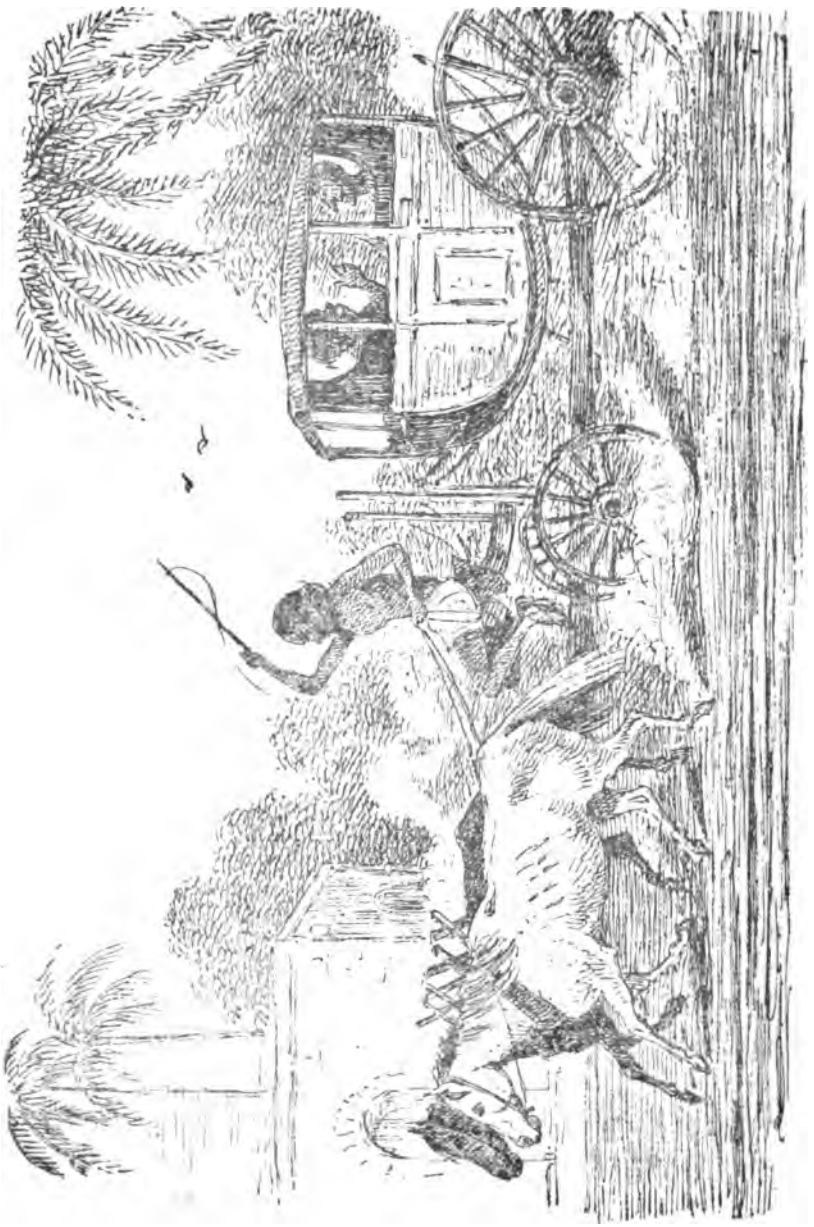
During my first ten or fifteen years, however, the keranchee was in its glory. What the derivation of the name, may be a puzzle to the etymologist. κεραυνος "a

thunderbolt," is possible from the noise, certainly not the rapidity of motion ; κεραννυμι "mix," from the melange of its occasional occupants, has suggested itself ; both have been rejected, and *keranee*, "a clerk, or writer," has met with partial favour, as this particular class were known patrons of the vehicle to convey them to and from office.

There is another name by which the carriage was once known, viz. the "champagnee," and this owes its origin to an incident worthy of record. It is said that a General Champigny, in ancient times, had the temerity once to commit his person to the tender mercies of this ricketty conveyance when going out to dinner with the Governor-General, and that, to the consternation of the vice-regal autocracy, and to the perplexity of the sentinel on duty, it was actually driven up to the very door of Government House !

Whether this was done from eccentricity, ignorance, or inability to procure another conveyance, deponent sayeth not ; a facetious friend suggests that the general may have been a little champagn'y himself on the occasion.

No one ever saw a new keranchee, any more than a dead donkey ; they seem to spring into existence clothed *cap-à-pie*, though with most rusty armour, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter. Throughout the whole range of the wheeled world, from the Grecian διφρος to the Irish wheelbarrow, there is nothing like it : with frail planks and gaping framework, you see it trembling and groaning under the weight of four, five, or six fat oleaginous baboos, the native driver kicking and thumping the starveling tattoos ; the whole affair exhibiting the



very type and image of frangibility, and yet the parts, by some mysterious and unintelligible power, hold together, while the fat occupants grin, and hold grave or merry converse, or doze away their time in soft and balmy slumber, never betraying the slightest distrust of the frail machine.

All this has passed away, and the little sketch here given is one of the few mementos of the "keranchee."

But in this description of notabilities I must not forget the "boxwala."

The Bengal boxwala is an animal *per se*; hawker, pedlar, itinerant, no known word of civilised or uncivilised vocabulary will truly and befittingly describe the phenomenon. He is like the female traveller after whom the coach-guard makes such tender inquiries, "What lady belongs to this ere band-box?" In such a way, and by like gradation of affinity, does the boxwala *belong* to his box.

Isolate him from the angular appendage of tin and padlock, he sinks into a cypher, mingling with the mass of brown humanity in which he lives.

In verity, he is a boxwala, and naught else; *box et preterea nihil*, as an inveterate punster friend will have it.

This custom of peripatetic trafficking, with its itinerant and locomotive machinery, most probably dates its origin from the settlement of an European community in India.

It is evidently an adaptation to the indolent habits of the Anglo-Indian, discovered by the self-interest of the Bengalee.

After gaining entrance to a house, he peeps into the room, or knocks at the door with confidence; sufficient

for him is the listless and equivocal assent of the unoccupied matron or idle damsel, and in another minute he is in the middle of the room, while at his heel, two, three, or four brown and semi-nude followers, with the capacious boxes on their heads enter, and with silent and stealthy action deposit in turns their freighted burthen and their own bodies. Their presence for a time is hardly noticed; but the head man commences his exhibition by gradually removing the choicest specimens of his various goods, and arranging them in the most captivating order on the ground, occasionally glancing at the *insouciante* lady, whom he is about to victimise, and muttering all the while half-whispered encomiums on the several articles. Meanwhile the lady, engrossed in her own occupations, casts her eye occasionally, and at short intervals on the operations at her side, regarding the whole scene with indifference, and not always relishing the interruption.

But the quiet perseverance of the boxwala triumphs in the end. Some attractive objects are produced and forced upon her attentions. The love of bargaining, or the desire of possession, forces itself on her mind, and she condescends to examine one or more of the articles with some little show of attention.

The Boxwala perceives his opportunity; quiet exultation possesses his mind, and persuasive tones issue from his anxious lips. The most attractive articles are once more carefully re-arranged in æsthetic order, the bodies of the squatting coolies are moved to a greater distance, and a slight advancement of the lady's person indicates the commencement of business.

And now ensues a scene worthy of all notice and

reflection. Squatted on their hams in the back-ground, like bronze automata, the actual porters of the tin world repose in calm indifference, their incurious and unimpressible minds irresponsive to a scene too often witnessed to excite any further interest.

Then begins the parley.

After seeing his box (his better half) safely deposited, the boxwala assumes his pose on the floor, and proceeds to unfold his wares.

The *penetralia* of the box are subjected to a complete *bouleversment*; every article is successively unlodged, unfolded, and displayed to the eyes of the uninterested dame, who scarce deigns to cast an occasional and rapid glance upon the exhibitor and his goods, while the importunate vendor accompanies the show with a running encomium, thrice repeated—"Best grod naple! Swisa moosline, very fine! twelve annas yard; kid gulubs (gloves), fresh labendur water, o-d'clone, warranted, please"—till he is brought up by a peevish "Oh, do stop, you horrid man! You call that fine muslin? What a dreadful cheat!" &c. &c.

If at last something strike the fastidious lady there then commences a bargaining in which our fair countrywoman displays a skill and science fully equal to the cunning of the astute Bengalee—"Twelve annas a yard, you dare to say! Why, I can get much finer at the shops for ten."

But I here give a small specimen of a real dialogue written down at the time by a friend (the late Edward Trevor), while I took a random sketch of the eloquent Madhub Das.

Boxwala, showing a piece of lace.—"Pray, ma'am,

this very fine, come cheap price; public auction you get cheap, but if at Tullohshâp * you get for one rupee six annas, then I take four annas."

Lady.—"Well, I can show you a much better piece, which I have got upstairs, and cheaper than yours."

Boxwala.—"We poor man expec little something, *something expec*—not make loss." (*Plaintively.*)

Lady.—"I will give you one rupee."

Boxwala.—"It is not my casht, ma'm; sell always two rupees; not my casht; I leave on spection ma'am; what ma'am can get in the bazaar, I give two annas less; what I ask, I not take always. Make little deduc—buy something."

And here the colloquy closes: the boxwala yields with well-simulated reluctance to the offer, the lady glories in her supposed victory, and both are satisfied.

But there is yet another notable in the animal world, well worthy of illustration, and that is the "tattoo."

The word, as far as I can discover, has no logical signification, but will, I am sure, appeal strongly and significantly to everyone who has been six months in Bengal, and especially in Calcutta. Though an unequivocal "Equus," yet "horse," "cob," or "pony," does not represent him—he is "tattoo," and nothing else.

One of his vocations, when harnessed to the inexpressible keranchee, has already been noticed; but he has since been transferred from that romantic vehicle, now a thing of other days, to the prosaic palankeen carriage—which has taken its place.

To give a perfect definition, or even an accurate

* *i.e.* Tulloh's shop.

description of the "tattoo" *par excellence* would be difficult. As usually seen, in his ordinary doings, he is thin, scraggy, sometimes self-willed, and occasionally vicious, but always bearing the signs of *breed*, fast in pace, well-shaped, and wondrously enduring. Many are the modes of his labour. In Calcutta he meets you at every turn; in the Mofussil he is mostly to be found in promiscuous labours, not unduly heavy; in Morshedabad, Patna, and other parts of Behar, his *specialité* is the "ekha," or one-horse chaise of the country, several illustrations of which will be found in subsequent chapters. At military stations, hundreds are sometimes attached to a cavalry regiment. Led by grass-cutters, a group returning from the interior with their mountains of grass is a sight. He is frequently ridden also by religious mendicants, who have disabled themselves from working by mutilation.

But irrespective of his labours, the tattoo is the constant companion of the Indian gamin, and is frequently to be seen at evening hours, after the labours

of the day are past, entering, sometimes reluctantly, at other times to all appearance with simplicity, into the gambols of the little nudities of the village.

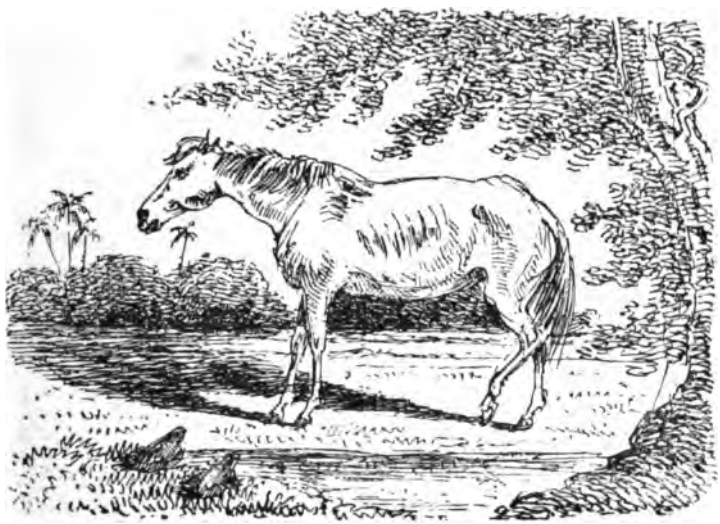
He is a favourite, also, with the young ensigns who cannot afford a horse, and, when well fed and moderately tended, frequently becomes the favourite of the regiment.

But time will fly, and old age will overtake even the Indian "tattoo," and in his latter days his situation is usually pathetic, if not pitiable.

Too weak for work, and too dull for play, he is at times in a miserable plight, for good grass is not always

attainable, and food is not often given when there is no return.

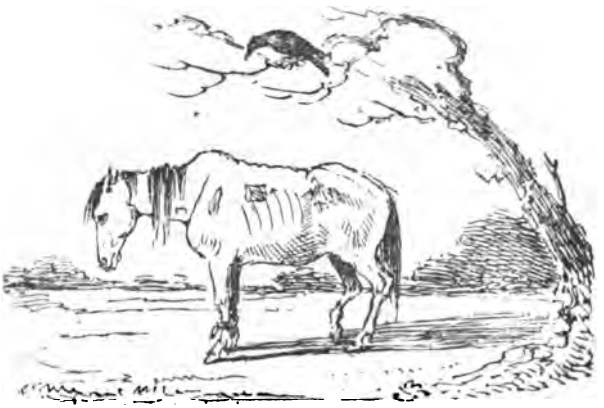
Occasionally the aged tattoo is to be seen, quiescent and depressed, but still in partial enjoyment of existence, and with sufficient food within his reach, but he is a melancholy object, and even the frogs will seem to regard him with compassion.



Others, again, more advanced in years, and victims of increasing decrepitude, are wretched objects—emaciated, weak, and scarcely able to pluck the scanty grass, while the presence of the anticipative crow, with

his inquiring eye, foreshadows a speedy exit to his misery.

ILLE ET NEFASTO TE POSUIT DIE.—*Hor. Od.*



ILL AND KNEE-FAST HE PLACED THEE HERE TO DIE.

In a future chapter, I shall present the tattoo of a higher sphere, and in his more genial and attractive character, in which, selected as "the most worthy," well-fed, and groomed, and rejoicing in polished accoutrements, he rises above the characteristic name which appertains to him in Calcutta and the Mofussil * villages, and appears on the stage, though still small in dimensions, as a veritable horse, to be admired and appreciated.

And here, perhaps, I may, with a view to disarm contingent criticism, say a few words in regard to the several objects which I have selected as principally worthy of notice at the commencement of my memoirs.

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* Country.

At first sight the selection may appear trifling and inappropriate, but it must be remembered that in setting before the public these notabilities, I do so, not with reference to their intrinsic and permanent importance, but only in consideration of their outward peculiarities, so different from all that an Englishman newly arrived in India has been in the habit of seeing, and in themselves so curious.

Setting aside the "keranchee" as now a thing of the past, and the "boxwala" as being chiefly connected with the female department of social life; passing over, also, the jackal and mosquito, as only presenting themselves at distant intervals, I appeal to the candour of my readers who have been in India, to say whether the three objects which first attracted their attention on their arrival in Calcutta, and still live in their recollection, are not those which I have presented to their notice.

Palaces require artistic observation before they can be appreciated. Governors and statesmen can be seen and studied only at a distance. Friends have to be made, and enemies detected, before they can be understood. Tigers are in the distant jungle, and elephants in the far-off hills; but the crow, the adjutant, and the tattoo, are seen, heard, and recognised every day and hour, at all times, and in all places.

CHAPTER VI.

FIRST YEAR IN CALCUTTA.

Lord William Bentinck Governor-General. — His Principal Measures. — Abolition of Sutee and Objectionable Law of Inheritance.—Unpopularity caused by the "Half-Batta" Retrenchment.—Injustice formerly done to him.—His high Character.—Personal Kindness to myself.—Frequent Visits to Government House in company of the Honourable John Elliot.—Take several Likenesses of Lord and Lady William. —Fulfilment of my brother Frederick's prophecy.—Proposal to Miss Charlotte Palmer.—Mr. Palmer's Scruples on account of my Health.—Kind interest taken by Lady William.—Mr. Palmer consents. — Engagement. — Accident on Calcutta Course.—Attack of Fever.—Pay a Visit to Pooree on recovery. —Invitation from Lady William to stay at Barrackpore.— Examination in Persian.—Prize.—Shabby mode of bestowal. —Second Examination. — Plucked. — Why? — Embarrassing betrayal by John Elliot.—Chowringhee Theatre.—Take the Part of "Sir Anthony Absolute."—John Elliot leaves Calcutta.—Mrs. Sargent.—Her Accomplishments.—Sketches.— The Black Hole.

THE year of our arrival in Calcutta (A.D. 1829) will ever be remembered as one of the most celebrated in

the annals of Indian administration. Lord William Bentinck, who, after years of unjust obloquy, had triumphed over malignity and injustice, had the year before reached India in the position of Governor-General, and had already given striking proof of his high abilities and noble character.

One of his most important measures was the abolition of "Sutee," that diabolical rite which doomed the new-made widow to the flames, and which no governor had hitherto ventured to denounce. The unjust law of inheritance also, which deprived the convert to Christianity of the rights of property, was in the same year cancelled, and many other wise and judicious reforms were accomplished. But Lord William Bentinck was personally unpopular. The peremptory orders of the Court of Directors compelled him to carry out certain measures connected with the pay and allowances of the officers of the Indian army, well known by the name of "Batta," and the odium excited by these reforms for a long time had overshadowed the credit of his great services.

To give an idea of the extent of unpopularity caused by this compulsory duty, I here quote a passage from Fanny Parkes' charming work, *Wanderings of a Pilgrim* (page 170), a copy of which the accomplished writer kindly gave me on my arrival in England.

"To-day's news is, that the Governor-General met the third Cavalry at Allahabad, on their march from Cawnpore to Benares. His lordship reviewed the regiment, and asked the officers to dinner, an invitation they all refused. This annoyed his lordship very much, being the first display of resentment manifested towards

him on his march, by the army, and he ordered them to dine with him on pain of forfeiting their rank, pay, and allowances, pending a reference to the Court of Directors. Of course the officers obeyed the order, they were obliged to do so. What an agreeable party the Governor-General must have had with guests whom he had forced to partake of the feast!"

It is interesting, and for obvious reasons peculiarly so to myself, to read in history that this great man, for such he was, trusting in the power of truth, "was determined not to rest satisfied till he had wiped off the disgrace to which he conceived the Court of Directors had unjustly subjected him by their abrupt dismissal.

"For many years after his unmerited sufferings, he was employed in the service of his country, both as a soldier and a diplomatist, but his thoughts were still turned to India, and his ambition was to return to it in possession of a higher appointment than that of which he had been deprived."

My own recollection of Lord William Bentinck, even at this distant period, is one of the warmest admiration and gratitude, admiration of his high character and noble aims, ardent gratitude for personal kindness, seldom surpassed, and entirely undeserved.

The Hon. John Elliot, nephew of Lord Minto, with whom I lived for the first few months in Calcutta, was on the most intimate terms with Lord and Lady William, and frequently took me to Government House, kindly showing me off in my character of amateur portrait-painter! Lady William herself became specially interested in my capacity of taking likenesses. I did several sketches at her particular request, not

only of Lord William separately, but of various members of the Viceregal staff, including him and herself, and in one, containing, at her special request, my own full-length likeness.

This auspicious intimacy led to results of no little importance to myself, and to an exhibition of kind and considerate sympathy on the part of Lady William which I shall never forget.

I have already mentioned, in narrating the incidents of our voyage on board the *Victory*, that in fulfilment of my brother Frederick's inspired prediction, I had formed an attachment to the youngest Miss Palmer. At the special request, however, of her brother-in-law, Captain Vernon Jillard, our fellow-passenger, I had refrained from making any declaration of my feelings at the time, though they were tolerably well known, by some at least, on board. But we had not been long on shore, when one evening, at an ever-memorable ball, I made my proposal, was conditionally accepted, and in the delirium of the moment walked home without my hat!

Mr. Palmer, when referred to, gave his consent, but entertained some scruple as to our immediate union, on the score of my health, which was supposed to be delicate. Could he have foreseen that fifty years afterwards we should celebrate, as we have, our "golden wedding," the happy progenitors of forty-five grandchildren, his apprehensions would have been relieved. But, in fact, I had been very delicate as a boy, and when about sixteen years old suffered from a mysterious pain in the hip, which compelled my mother to take me away from school for nearly two years, during which time I scarcely left my couch.

This long confinement had rendered me pale and thin, and my appearance was quite sufficient to excite the apprehensions of an anxious father. These misgivings were, however, on some occasions alleviated by an amusing counterplot. Just before I joined the party at dinner, a slight *soupçon* of rouge was judiciously applied to my cheeks by my fiancée's sister on the stairs, before Mr. Palmer appeared, a pardonable deception, of which the kindly motive forms the best vindication.

But that which most effectually served to expedite our marriage, was the kind and active sympathy evinced by Lady William Bentinck in the matter.

The failure of the great house of Palmer and Co. had rendered it impossible for Mr. John Palmer to afford any pecuniary help, and my own incipient salary left no available surplus for the extra expenses which would be necessarily entailed, while against borrowing money from a native (which was too frequently done) I was specially warned by Lady William herself. These items of difficulty produced a dilemma, the particulars of which Lady William by her kind and almost motherly encouragement induced me to reveal, in one of those half-hours of private conversation in which she invited my confidence. The kind lady took in the circumstances at once, and promptly met every difficulty; she promised us the use of a bungalow (cottage) in the Government park at Barrackpore for our honeymoon, and of a large furnished house belonging to Government, situated in the Calcutta fort, for our residence afterwards, till I should join the station to which I had been appointed; and finally said that Lord William Bentinck would himself lend me any sum of money

required for extra expenses incurred by our marriage, without interest. The next day Lord William sent me two hundred pounds. The road to Elysium was thus unexpectedly smoothed by this unlooked-for assistance, and very shortly afterwards I experienced additional kindness from the same source.

I had, as all young civilians did in those days, purchased an Arab horse, the possession of which was one of the dreams of my Indian life. The steed which I had purchased had belonged to a fellow-civilian, was characteristically Arab in form, colour, and disposition, and had accordingly won my confidence, and secured my special approval by the steadiness and docility with which he allowed me to ride in close proximity to the carriages of those with whom I might wish to converse. One evening I was riding on the old course, the "Rotton Row" of Calcutta, by the side of Mrs. Sargent's carriage, in which were the two Misses Palmer with Sam Palmer, one of their brothers, comfortably seated and quite unprepared for adventure.

The carriage was going at full trot, and I in conversation with my fiancée was somewhat heedlessly leaning my left arm on the edge, talking with greater earnestness than was prudent in an attitude which altogether disarranged my equilibrium, when suddenly my "trusty Arab" came violently down on his nose, and I, with still greater violence, shot over his head and descended on mine, vanishing from the sight of the inmates, and, to all appearance, thrown under the wheel. The shock, as may be imagined, was considerable, and it so alarmed Miss Palmer's brother, that he swung

himself round and out of the carriage, while still in progress, and reached the ground quite as prostrate, and probably more hurt than myself.

The carriage necessarily advanced some few yards before it was pulled up, and the sight, to a spectator, of our two figures, stretched in different attitudes on Mother Earth, and looking helplessly at each other, must have been interesting.

My disappearance was so sudden, and I had been so close to the carriage, that the effect was alarming to the inmates, and not particularly pleasant to me. But I had received no serious injury, and the tender sympathy excited by my overthrow afforded ample compensation for my suffering. I was taken into the carriage and conveyed to my room in the Writers Buildings, while my peccant horse, with untroubled conscience, but knees slightly chafed, was entrusted to one of Mr. Sargent's syces and taken to the stables.

Had I consulted my own personal sensations, I should have taken refuge in my bed, and endeavoured to sleep off the effect of the contusion; but I thought of others, and after an hour's rest, though not over comfortable, I managed to go over to Mr. Sargent's to dinner, not only for the pleasure which it afforded, but for the sake of giving bodily assurance to anxious hearts that I was not seriously injured.

But I did not quite escape. The result of the *boule-versement* was a slight fever (the only fever I had during my entire sojourn in India).

When convalescent, I went for a change of air to Pooree, or Juggernath, a station in the Bay of Bengal on the sea-side, where Edward Repton of the Civil

Service, an old friend whom I knew in England, was living. This is the gentleman who shortly afterwards went to England to be married, and whose account of my appearance and proceedings, including "whiskers," "sketches," and "buns," my brother Frederick repeats in his letter quoted in my first chapter.

I there also, for the first time, met Mr. Binney Colvin —the brother of the well-known and distinguished John Colvin—then an assistant, and eventually a judge of the Calcutta High Court.

On my return to Calcutta, during which I was attended by the celebrated Dr. Nicholson (who on the occasion of his visits to me in the "Writers' Buildings," looked more at my caricatures than myself), Lady William Bentinck, who had made frequent inquiries about me during my illness, invited me to Barrackpore for change of air, where she treated me, I can truly say, as if I had been her son. Lord William himself also showed marked consideration and kindness, and I frequently sat with him in his study, in which he was invariably accompanied by a sagacious but inconsiderate cockatoo, who walked about his table, mounted his shoulders, and whose greatest delight was to try and take the pen out of his master's hand. Lady William lent me each day, while I was recovering my health, a grey pony for my constitutional ride in the park, a beautiful little creature, of which she afterwards made me a present, and which will be seen among my illustrations in a future Chapter.

I cannot refrain from dwelling on these instances of disinterested kindness, coming as they did from one in Lady William Bentinck's position, and being shown to an insignificant youngster like myself, who had no claim

whatever upon her, as they form subjects of such pleasing remembrance, and are connected more or less with the future of my somewhat eventful career in India.

And here I must say a few words regarding Barrackpore itself, a small distant view of which is shown in the sketch on p. 85. Barrackpore is notorious as the residence of the Governor-General; before it acquired its military name, which speaks for itself; it was, and still is, in Hindostanee, called "Acharnuk."

The word is derived from the well-known Job Charnoch, the agent of the East India Company, a gentleman of historical and somewhat singular notoriety.

It was through his able agency that the Company obtained possession of the city.

His own adventures were exceptional. He was present at a "sutee," and falling desperately in love with the unhappy widow who was about to be roasted, rescued her from the fiery pile, married her, and adopted the Hindoo faith. After his beloved's death he is said to have made to her manes a yearly offering of a cock.

The following amusing paragraph is taken from the book of Mrs. Parkes, who visited Barrackpore shortly after her first arrival in Calcutta:

"There is a menagerie in the park at Barrackpore, in which are some remarkable fine tigers and cheetas. My ayha requested to be allowed to go with me, particularly wishing to see an hyena. While she was looking at the beast I said, "Why did you wish to see an hyena?' Laughing and crying hysterically she answered: 'My husband and I were asleep, our child was between us; an hyena stole the child and ran off

with it to the jungle. We roused the villagers, who pursued. When they returned they brought me half the mangled body of my infant daughter: that is why I wish to see an hyena!'"

Being now an engaged man, and looking forward to an early marriage, my first object was to pass the prescribed examination in languages. The first examination in Persian I had accomplished well within the time, and had been honoured with a gold medal—honoured, at least, in the fact, but certainly not in the mode of bestowal, which was simply disreputable.

One day, a common chuprassee, meeting me in the street, handed me something wrapped up in a scrap of dirty paper, for which he demanded a receipt. On opening the paper, I found a gold medal, my honorary prize! This was the "new style," a reaction on the public ceremony formerly in vogue, especially in the days of Lord Wellesley, when such prizes were distributed with great ceremony and display. I gave the receipt, and responded to the honour by having the medal at once converted into a pair of ear-rings for Miss Palmer.

My second examination in Hindee had been deferred by my fever, and by a subsequent visit to the sea-side at Pooree, where I had stayed for about a month, enjoying the sea breeze, and, as my brother says in his letter, "eating buns, and sketching." All hope of a second medal was, therefore, hopeless.

I went up for my examination, however, on my return, and was plucked! and that, under rather laughable circumstances. My readers will remember how, at my first examination in London, caricature had helped me in my algebraic dilemma; but it was not so on this

occasion. We were all assembled in the examination-room. "Monsieur," the examiner, though I believe a very good man, was decidedly quizzical-looking, a gentleman who put his pen behind his ear as he sat, and tucked his feet backward under his chair. The temptation was too much for me, and I secretly perpetrated a small sketch, back view, with the soles of rather large feet conspicuous under his chair, and the pen painfully fore-shortened.

Just as I was putting the last touches, the examiner rose, and, turning short round, approached my table. I hid the paper, but he saw the movement, and coming up to me, requested me to show what I was concealing. I assured him it was no "crib," and had nothing to do with the examination, but I had rather not show it. He insisted; there was no help for it, he would not accept denial. I showed him the paper. There was a dead and ominous silence. I was plucked.

It was clearly a case of suicide on my part, but when I heard the result, I ventured to prophesy to my fellow-examinees that I should pass at the next examination, though I would not look at a book in the interval! The pledge was redeemed, and I passed with credit. Such is human nature. How true it is that "ridicule kills." I ought to have been wiser, or, at least, more careful, for a month or two before I had experienced the fact that the wisest of men is sensitive on the subject of his outward covering; feels uncomfortable at the idea of his mortal frame being limned without his knowledge and concurrence, however free from ridicule or unkindness the limner may be.

Very shortly after I had taken up my residence with

John Elliot, himself the soul of mirth and jest and fun, he discovered my capacity for taking accurate likenesses from recollection; he was in raptures, and immediately purchased a large sketch-book, in which he entreated me to take, as opportunity offered, a series of the big-wigs of Calcutta. For this purpose, he, at short intervals, invited in turn the Judges of the Sudder and Supreme Court, Members of Council, and other high and mighty functionaries, and as each came and went, he was entered into the fatal book! All this was done under the implied seal of confidence; Sir Charles Metcalfe, who was a constant visitor at the house, and thoroughly enjoyed the procedure, being, if I remember rightly, the only person admitted to participate in the secret.

One morning, a peculiarly large assemblage of these personages had been invited to breakfast; the meal was nearly over, when John Elliot, suddenly rising from his chair, took up the sketch-book, and throwing it before Sir Edward Ryan, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, said, "There is a book that will amuse you"; and as he said these words, he marched out of the room as if to fetch something.

My horror and distress may be imagined; none of the likenesses were *caricatures* in the vulgar sense, but all were faithful portraits, "nothing exaggerated, nor aught set down in malice," but, from their very fidelity, necessarily representing such peculiarities of form and feature as existed in the original.

I felt myself getting hot in the face, and my discomfort was enhanced, though not unmixed with internal amusement, when I discovered the wicked eye of John

Elliot peering at me from behind the folds of the China screen, which stood at the entrance of the room.

There was no escape, however, Sir Edward Ryan turned over the leaves of the book, and greeted each portrait with hearty laughter, till suddenly, as he lifted a page, he became ominously silent, the smile was ghastly, he had his portrait before him! sitting cross-legged, conspicuous for high nose and attenuated calves. My confusion was complete, and I can scarce remember how I relieved myself. Mercifully, just then there was a general move, and in a few minutes I had to bear the brunt of John Elliot's uncontrollable laughter and joyous, though somewhat thoughtless, badinage.

But the result was scarcely pleasant, and for many days afterwards I recognised sundry grave or averted looks, where I had before been welcomed with "wreathed smiles."

From that day I made an internal resolution to abandon the practice of portrait-painting from memory, save in the case of entire strangers, or undeniably pretty women, who are rather pleased than offended when they hear they have been drawn behind their backs. This rule, however, on one memorable occasion, some twenty-seven years after, viz. in 1857, I set aside, as will be seen before this work is finished.

The few minutes spent in this hospitable house were very happy, and though not, perhaps, as profitably employed as might be, were fruitful in pleasant experiences, affording an insight into the life of the higher Anglo-Indian classes, the formation of friendships, valuable in their future incidents, and much trifling bye-play, not worthy of record. I and my friend

and cabin companion, Pierce Taylor, used to pay visits together, and were immensely amused by finding that several people took us for brothers, not noticing the difference between "er" and "or," in our names, or the dissimilarity of our physiognomies. The joke was enhanced when they occasionally said, "How delightful it must have been for you brothers coming in the same cabin, both of you drawing too" (for Pierce Taylor, like myself, was addicted to the "fine arts," and painted landscapes admirably). We allowed the amusing assumption, I grieve to say, to stand uncontradicted. We had never made the assertion, but as the good folks took the relationship for granted, we satisfied our consciences, and did not disturb their conclusions.

One of the first social events worth noticing, in which I took part in Calcutta, was connected with the stage.

The well-known Chowringhee Theatre was in the height of its celebrity at the time of our first arrival in India.

This was an institution established and kept up by private parties, but which in the excellent acting which it exhibited, and the admirable management by which it was conducted, was equal to many of the minor theatres in London, and superior to most provincial theatres.

Seldom, or ever, was there so efficient a body of amateur actors as those who were in Calcutta assembled in 1829.

Horace Hayman, Wilson, James Barwell, Henry Meredith Parker, G. Stocqueler, Major Sewell, and last, though not least, William Palmer, the "Calcutta Kean," as he was called.

The latter, then in the civil service, was an elder

brother of my wife, perhaps the finest amateur tragic actor that ever existed.

As my fellow-passengers of the *Victory* had spoken in flattering terms of my histrionic powers, I was asked, very shortly after our arrival, to make my debût on the Chowringhee stage, and though Lady William Bentinck in her kind regard for my interests threw cold water on the proposition, for fear of its leading to idle habits, I was persuaded once to appear in the character of Sir Anthony Absolute in "The Rivals."

It is not for me to say how the part was performed, but it is a curious fact, that having represented the delicious old father in 1830, in 1865, just thirty-five years afterwards, whilst joint manager of the Simlah theatre, I took the part of Captain Absolute the son, a *bouleversement* in the ordinary progress, even of dramatic personation, which does not often occur.

At length, after several months of captivating idleness, my kind host (John Elliot), with my cabin-fellow (Pierce Taylor), left Calcutta for the upper provinces, the former on official duty as Postmaster-General, the latter to visit his relations. I was, therefore, obliged to take rooms in the "Writers' Buildings," a well-known, if not celebrated row of houses on one side of Tank Square, set aside in those days for the accommodation of young civilians before they passed their examination.

Here, under the guidance and instruction of my faithful little Indian bearer, Doorjun, whose portrait I have mentioned in Chapter III., I commenced house-keeping, and, as I generally dined out, my labour was not intense. Doorjun's first piece of active service during that time, was his indignant exposure of my khidmutgar (table

servant), who had charged me a rupee for a bundle of wooden tooth-picks, the real value of which was, at the outside, one anna, the sixteenth part of a rupee.

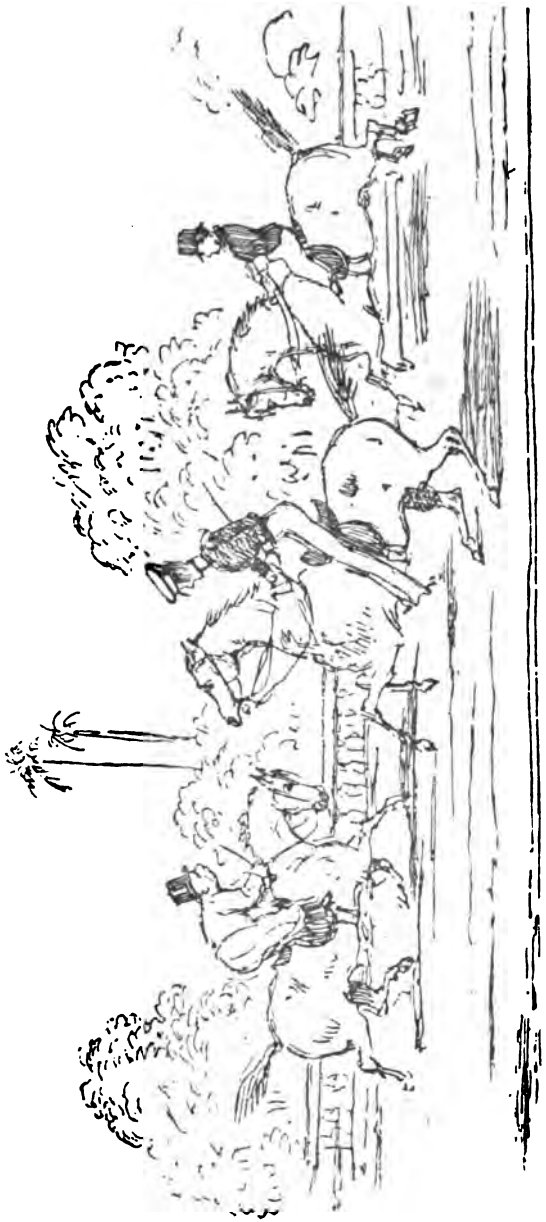
Some short time before the break-up of John Elliot's happy household, John Palmer had left his beautiful house at Garden Reach, his handsome property had been sold by auction, and he had himself gone to live with his son-in-law, Henry Sargent, a civilian, at that time a member of the Board of Customs.

Both the Misses Palmer had gone with him, and with Mrs. Sargent and husband, spite of the sadness caused by the great failure, formed a pleasant and cheerful party.

Mrs. Sargent was a charming and most accomplished lady; she sang exquisitely, and had great artistic talent; her cheerful and attractive society was an unspeakable comfort to her younger sisters, and her companionship was fully appreciated by myself. We were constantly in search of amusing subjects for our pencils, and I have been able now to obtain from her sundry little sketches which have been in her possession ever since; copies of a few of these I here give. One a faithful representation of the costume then worn by fascinating females; one, as a specimen of rather mischievous caricatures, the portraits of three well-known gentlemen, drawn before I had suffered from John Elliot's treason; and one in facetious personification of a joke between Mrs. Sargent and myself, often repeated, especially at stupid parties—viz. that we were always "catching each other's eyes."

Happy days, more than half a century ago!

It was during the latter portion of this, my first sojourn in



Calcutta, that in conjunction with the very few individuals (four or five at the most), who took interest in painting, I endeavoured to form a Brush Club—Major Henderson, W. Prinsep, Trevor Plowden, and one or two others, whose names I cannot recall, were my coadjutors, and we used to meet together in each other's houses, or in the Town Hall, and exercise such artistic powers as we possessed in company; but the association could not be called a success, though we passed many pleasant days together, and, as we were bound to do, generally admired one another's performances.

But Calcutta was not propitious to the cultivation of art; there were no professional artists, no public galleries, and very few pictures worth seeing, in the possession of private individuals.

It will be seen in a future chapter how my "love for the fine arts" was quoted by an influential official to my prejudice, and employed to deprive me of a high appointment.

There is one reminiscence connected with Calcutta which I have omitted to mention, I mean that of the Black Hole.

All who have read or heard anything of the sensational days in which the awful event designated by these little words occurred, will doubtless be familiar with the facts, but some in the present fast day, when men, women, and children find little time for reading, may like to be reminded of the awful event which the monument memorialises. The following is an extract from Beveridge's *History of India*:—

"The whole formed a cubical space of only eighteen feet, completely inclosed by dead walls on all sides, except

the west, where two windows strongly barred with iron furnished the only supplies of air, but gave no ventilation, as at this time no breezes blew except from the south and east. Few were aware of the nature of the horrid place till they found themselves crammed within it, and had the door shut behind them. Their whole number was 146.

"It was about eight o'clock when they entered, and in a very few minutes the dreadful consequences began to appear. Attempts were first made to force the door, but it opened inwards and could not be made to yield. Mr. Holwell, who had secured a place at one of the windows, seeing an old officer "who seemed to carry some compassion in his countenance," offered him 1,000 rupees to get them separated into two apartments. He went off, but soon returned, saying it was impossible. The offer was increased to 2,000 rupees, but the answer was the same. The nabob, without whose orders it could not be done, was asleep, and no man durst awake him. Meanwhile suffocation was doing its work. First, profuse perspiration, then raging thirst, and lastly, in not a few instances, raving madness followed before death relieved the sufferer. The general cry was 'Water! water!' and several skins of it were furnished by the natives outside, some apparently from compassion, and others from brutal merriment, holding up torches to the windows to enjoy the desperate struggles among the unhappy prisoners as each supply was handed in. From nine to eleven this dreadful scene continued. After this the number who had already fallen victims was so great that the survivors began to breathe more freely. At six in the morning an order

arrived to open the prison. It was not easily executed, for so many dead bodies were lying behind the door that twenty minutes elapsed before it could be forced back so as to leave a passage. Of the 146 who had been thrust into the dungeon only twenty-three came out, and these more dead than alive."

While I am writing, a paragraph from the *Pioneer* has appeared in a London paper, stating that the present Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal has ordered a monument to be re-erected in memory of this awful event.

The desirability of this has, however, been questioned, as will be seen by the following letter from Mr. Talboys Wheeler, which appeared in the columns of the *Times* when the report was published.

I give both extract and letters, as the question is an interesting one :—

"THE BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA.

"To the Editor of the *Times*.

"SIR,

"It is announced by the last mail from India that a monument is to be immediately set up at Calcutta as a memorial of those who perished in the Black Hole in 1756. The same proposal was made sixty years ago, when the Black Hole was removed to make way for other buildings; but the Marquis of Hastings refused to sanction it, on the ground that it would only keep alive the old antagonism between Europeans and Natives.

"The decision of Lord Hastings ought not to be ignored, even at this distance of time. Educated natives are perfectly aware that the Black Hole disaster was the result of an accident rather than a crime. While, therefore, it may be right to raise memorials of the massacres of Patna and Cawnpore as moral lessons for

all time, nothing is to be gained by setting up a memorial of the Black Hole in the greatest European city in the East. It can only revive old controversies, while it may possibly awaken old animosities, and it will certainly be regarded with bitter feelings by the educated natives of Bengal.

"Yours faithfully,

"T. TALBOYS WHEELER.

"Witham, Essex."

"THE 'BLACK HOLE' MONUMENT.

"Sir Ashley Eden has ordered a facsimile of the monument which was placed by Mr. J. Z. Holwell over the spot where those who perished in the Black Hole were buried, to be at once erected on the site where the original monument stood. The spot is at present marked by the ornamental lamp-post at the junction of Dalhousie Square, North and Clive Streets. A drawing of the old monument forms a frontispiece to '*Indian Tracts by Mr. Holwell and Friends*, London, 1767,' a copy of which is to be seen in the Metcalfe Hall. The monument was removed by the Marquis of Hastings, as he considered that the inscription on it tended to keep race antipathies alive. The site of the Black Hole is now covered by the portion of the verandah on the eastern face of the General Post Office, between the third and fourth pillars, commencing from the north, and a slab has been ordered to be inserted into one of the pillars recording the fact."—*Pioneer*.

I confess I concur in the sentiments expressed by Mr. Wheeler. The best thing to be done with the Black Hole, is to shut it up.

CHAPTER VII.

CALCUTTA.

I marry Miss C. Palmer.—Wedding at St. John's Cathedral.—Honeymoon passed in a Bungalow at Barrackpore, lent by Lady William Bentinck.—Period shortened to enable us to be present at a Large Ball.—Sensation caused in Calcutta by Waltzing.—Government House in Fortwilliam lent to us by Lord William Bentinck for our Occupation.—Departure by Water for Pooree, on our Way to Cuttack, the Station to which I had been appointed.—Voyage in Salt-sloop lent by Mr. Sargent.—Fine Weather and Prosperous Trip.—Reach Pooree in safety.—Received by Mr. and Mrs. Luke.—Start by Night from Pooree in Palankeen.—Sensational Adventure.—My Wife's Palankeen dropped by the Bearers.—Her Alarm and Fright.—Arrangements for our Progress.—Arrive safely, but both in the same Palankeen.—Facetious Comments of the Residents.

On the 17th of July 1830, all temporary difficulties having been providentially removed, I led my betrothed to the altar, and God's blessing was given to our union. We were married at St. John's Church, the old Cathedral of Calcutta. Lady William Bentinck, as I have

before mentioned, lent us a bungalow in the Government House grounds at Barrackpore for our honeymoon, and we promised to shorten the period of our beatific isolation for the purpose of appearing at a grand ball which she was about to give, and at which our presence was specially required, as my wife and I, with one other couple, were the only individuals who, in those distant days, ventured to waltz, a performance which astonished some and shocked others of the spectators, but gave infinite gratification to Lady William, who always begged us to exhibit ourselves once or twice in the evening.

Another "happy couple," Mr. and Mrs. Dick, were occupants of a neighbouring bungalow in the park, and returned to Calcutta about the same time as ourselves.

On our resuming the condition and pursuits of ordinary mortals in Calcutta, we found, to our intense satisfaction and no little surprise, the Government House in the fort prepared for our reception by orders of Lord William Bentinck, and I need scarcely say we were comfortably settled.

It is curious, and will to some be interesting, to contrast the expansive system of official superintendence in force during the time of which I am writing and that which was afterwards instituted and now exists. If a junior civilian in the present day fails to join the station to which he is nominated within a month of his appointment, heavy penalties await him—rebuke, fine, possibly suspension. But in 1830 discipline, at least in my case, was not so stern. I had been appointed assistant to the Commissioner of Cuttack, the principal station in Orissa, before our marriage, but as the journey thither in the rainy season—which lasts from June to October—would

have been difficult and disagreeable, whether by sea or land, I remained quietly in Calcutta, unquestioned and unchallenged, for three months and more, living in the Government House, and certainly not "unto the world unknown."

We remained here for several months, surrounded by friends and relations, and in the enjoyment of every comfort.

I organised a small fencing and single-stick club, which was joined by several friends, and afforded no little amusement. Fencing had been one of my delights in England, and I was a constant visitor at Angelo's rooms in Bond Street, where I was considered about No. 3 in the order of merit.

When the gloomy rains had passed, and symptoms of the clear cold weather had appeared in October, I received a courteous note from the private secretary to the Governor-General, Mr. Pakenham, asking me in the most civil terms, "when I proposed to join my appointment?"!

I, of course, took the hint, and graciously condescended to inform him, in reply, that I intended making preparations for my departure in the course of the current month.

The district of Cuttack, of which I shall give a brief description in a future chapter, is some three hundred miles distant from Calcutta. The trip by land, even in October, would have been to the last degree disagreeable and tedious, especially for a lady unused to dâk travelling, but in those palmy days of official benevolence there was a remedy at hand. The Board of Customs, Salt, and Opium, one of those aggregates of official

wisdom which merges individual in collective responsibility, had at its disposal a small fleet of salt sloops. My wife's brother-in-law, Mr. Henry Sargent, was a member of the Board. The passage of a few days down the Bay of Bengal would bring us to Juganath, or Pooree, on the coast, and within fifty miles of my station, Cuttack. We jumped, therefore, at the offer of an official sloop, and embarked, bag and baggage, for our destination. Our sojourn in Calcutta, for the months immediately following our marriage, had been most pleasant; society, dinner-parties, balls, sketching, portrait-painting, had been diversified by the amusements of riding, fencing, and single-stick; and altogether, I may say, our first experiences of Calcutta life were uninterruptedly pleasant, and we left the great city with unfeigned regret.

Our sea-trip to Pooree was propitious; fine weather, a quiet sea, and a daily accession of bracing cold, combined to secure our comfort, and in three or four days we anchored off the coast of Pooree, famous for the great temple of Juganath. A description of the station I shall give in a future chapter.

After staying two or three days at Pooree where we were kindly received by Mr. and Mrs. Luke, we entered our palankeens, and started for Cuttack.

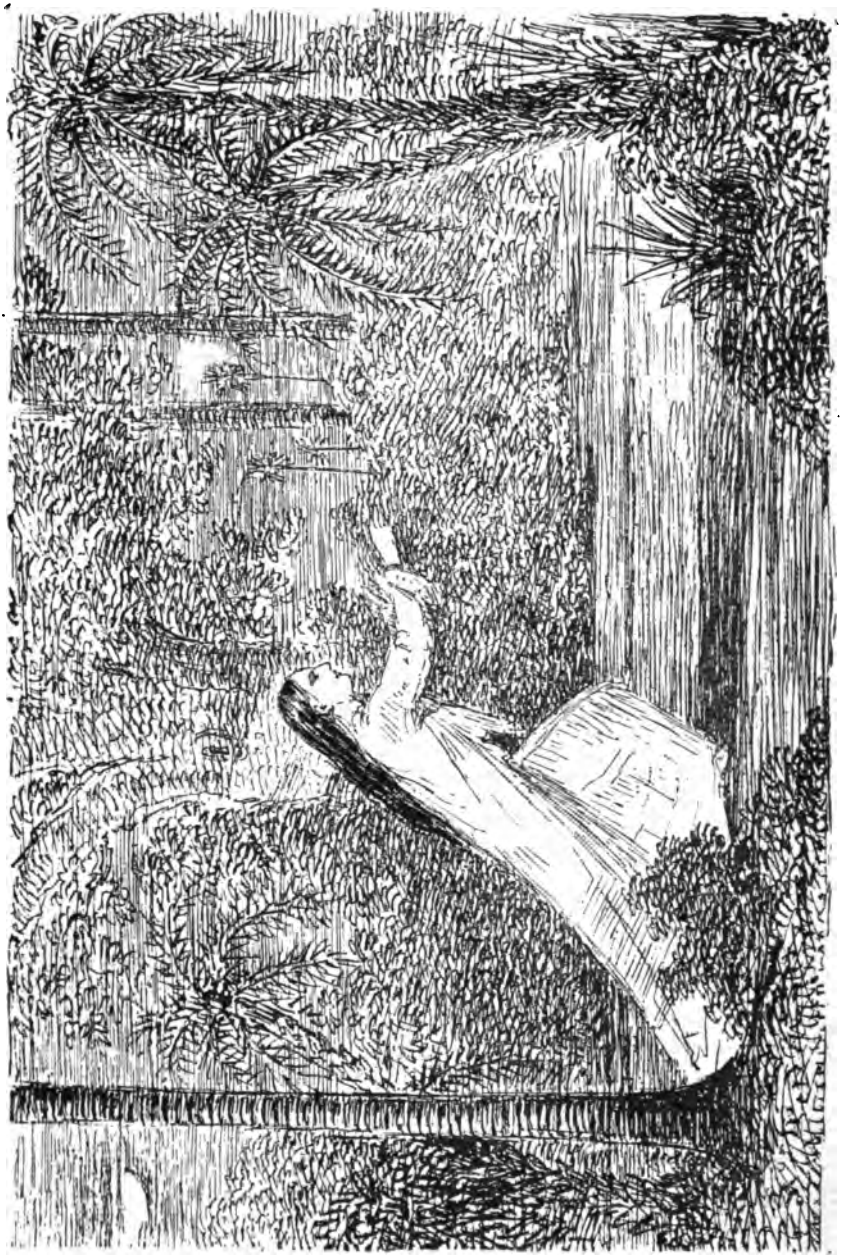
Our party consisted of my wife, my wife's sister, myself, and an African maid-servant, who had been for many years in my wife's family, and had come with us from England. We three were to travel in palankeens, or palkees as they are familiarly called; Catherine, the maid-servant, in a tonjohn, or open chair.

We started at close of day, and, as Cuttack was fifty

miles distant, we expected to arrive early on the following morning. We were not, however, destined to accomplish this, our first Indian dák trip, without adventure. We had proceeded for several hours, I had gradually accustomed myself to the smell and glare of the torch which was carried by the mussalchee, or torch-bearer, and was fast forgetting the world and all its cares in incipient sleep, when I suddenly heard Catherine's voice screaming to me, as if in distress. Rousing myself from my temporary torpor I listened, and then heard her say, or rather shriek, "Master! Master!" On this I made my bearers go closer to her tonjohn, when she said: "I am sure I see Miss Charlotte" (she always ignored our marriage) "out of her palankeen. Look! she is running along the road." I put my head out of my palankeen, and saw to my horror, not unmixed with amusement, the slight and graceful figure of my wife, clothed in a white dressing-gown, running along the road with her arms outstretched towards us, the figure lightened by the blazing torch, and followed at some distance by the bearers.

In a few minutes she reached us, out of breath and panting, and in great excitement told us that the bearers had dropped her palankeen, that she had got out in a great fright, fancying they had done this on purpose, and her alarm was increased by the men surrounding and grinning at her, and especially the mussalchee, or torch-bearer, who, by the glare of his torch, added to the strangeness of the scene.

The dilemma was distressing, but at the same time infinitely absurd. The bearers themselves were chattering and grinning, never probably having witnessed such a



scene or carried so volatile a traveller. But though my wife was somewhat reassured by the obvious innocence of the men, she declared her fixed determination not to enter the palankeen again; so after some consultation, the difficulty was met by removing the drawer at the end of my palkee, taking out all the small luggage, placing her pillow where my drawer had been, and then both of us getting into it.

We were both light weights, and by borrowing four of the eight bearers belonging to the empty palkee, and lying opposite each other, the arrangement was emi-

nently successful, and we reached our destination in comfort.

But the incident gave rise to a standing joke against us for many months, some of the facetious residents of Cuttack having given it out that we were such an affectionate couple that we could not suffer separation even in a palankeen!

As some of my readers may not be fully aware of the character, accessories, and mode of conveyance appertaining to the palankeen, I here quote an admirable description of it, given by the well-known George Stocqueler in his work on India, published in 1857, p. 89.

This with the annexed sketch will give the uninitiated an idea of the only conveyance available for English gentlemen, ladies, and children, however distant the journey before them, in the days I am describing.

"The dawk or palankeen conveyance is a certain if not a rapid means of transit. Ensconced in a palankeen borne by four natives, who are accompanied by four or eight more to relieve them at intervals, you are carried up the country at the rate of something less than three miles an hour; lying your length along a well-stuffed mattrass, covered with silk or morocco leather, supported by pillows, and having in front of you, at the upper end of the interior of the palankeen, a shelf and drawer, and nettings, containing books, a telescope, writing materials, biscuits, and a bottle of weak brandy and water, you pass over many miles delightfully enough. You stop when you please, and at intervals arranged by yourself, you halt at a bungalow or small building on the ground floor, which the Government has constructed

for the accommodation of travellers in a country where no roadside inn offers shelter to the wayfarer. Here an active servant prepares you a breakfast, or a simple dinner of curried fowl, while a mussalchee will procure you the means of having a refreshing bath in a room appropriated to such purposes."

CHAPTER VIII.

CUTTACK.

Description of Cuttack.—Origin of Name.—Former History under the Mahrattas. — Our First Arrival. — Engaged a small Bungalow.—Military Lines.—Mr. John Palmer pays us a Visit.—Temporary return to a Calcutta recommended.—Mr. Sargent engages to send a Salt-sloop to Pooree to bring us.—We get to Pooree for the Purpose.—Surf so high that we are unable to Embark.—After Two or Three Days make the Attempt.—Fearful Scene on the Surf.—Boat driven back. —Mr. Palmer receives a Blow.—Compelled to abandon the Sea Trip, and proceed to Calcutta by Land.—Arrival in Calcutta.—Take Rooms at Spence's Hotel, and hire a House in Camac Street.—Birth of our First Child.—Start on our Return to Cuttack, *viâ* Pooree.—Once more in a Salt-sloop.— Arrive at Pooree in safety.

CUTTACK, so called from "katak" (fort), is the principal station of the province or division, as it is officially called, of Orissa.

The province was acquired by the English from the Mahrattas in 1803.

Dr. Hunter, in his wonderful work on the statistics of India, divides the district into three distinct tracts.

Firstly. A marshy woodland strip along the coast, from three to thirty miles in breadth.

Secondly. Arable plains, stretching inland for about forty miles, and intersected by several large rivers.

Thirdly. A brooken hilly region which separates the settled part of Orissa from the semi-independent tributary states.

The great characteristic of the district is the multiplicity of rivers, the principal of which are the "Muhanudie" (or Great River), and the Kutjooree, in the bifurcation of which the city of Cuttack is situated.

The province of Cuttack was originally possessed by the Buddhists and Hindoos, subsequently conquered and *annexed* by the Mahomedans, and lastly, fell under the sway of the Mahrattas, from whom it was taken by the British in 1803.

In the year in which I first went there, the thirty years' settlement, which had been made shortly after the British conquest, was just expiring, and measures (as will be seen in the next chapter) were being taken for re-settlement. My space will not admit of my entering on a description of the country, but it may be interesting to give a very brief notice of the state of things under Mahratta rule, as recorded by Mr. Sterling, one of the first commissioners, in his account of Orissa, published in the *Asiatic Researches*.

The British Government has many short-comings and some crimes to answer for, but when we read the historical records of Mahratta rule, we may appreciate the blessing which the transfer of the provinces to the "Company Buhadoor," with all its faults, must have proved to the persecuted people.

The account which is taken from Dr. W. Hunter's valuable work is almost incredible, but will help the reader in his appreciation of the "white man's rule."

"The 'Mahratta' collected the land revenue in this way:—An underling of the Government entered a village, called the people together, and ordered one man to give him so many pans or kahans of cowries,* and another so many.

"If the people did not at once pay they were first beaten with sticks, and if that would not do, they were afterwards tortured. A favourite mode of torture was to thrust a brass nail between the finger's nail and flesh. Another consisted of throwing the man on the ground, placing two crossed bamboos over his chest, and gradually pressing on them till the man consented to pay what was demanded; if he still refused to pay, the operation was repeated on his stomach, back, legs, arms, &c.

"If the Mahratta saw a man was fat, they said that he had eaten plenty of 'ghi,'† and must be wealthy, so all people tried to keep lean.

"If they saw anyone wearing clean clothes, they declared he could afford to pay, so all people went about in dirty clothes.

"If they saw a man with a door to his house, they said it was plain he had something, so people either did not keep a door, or hid them when the 'amla'‡ were coming.

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* Cowries—small shells used as money.

† Ghi—clarified butter.

‡ Amla—native official subordinates.

"Above all, if a man lived in a masonry (pukha*) house, he was sure to be fleeced. The Mahrattas held that a man who could build a pukha house could always afford them 100 rupees. They also had another test to find out whether a man had money.

"They got together the leaves which serve as plates, and on which is served the family repast, and poured water over them; if this did not cover every part of the leaves, they declared that they were greasy, and that the family were all ghi eaters, and must be possessed of money. They used to enter houses, even the women's apartments, dig up the floors, bore the walls, and sometimes pull them down altogether in search of money."

"The Mahrattas made no roads or embankments, they never thought of doing either; there were roads in those days, but not made ones, they were simply tracts across fields."

Such was the former pleasant condition of the picturesque district to which I had been appointed.

My position was that of "Assistant Commissioner," a sort of juvenile appendage to the chief officer's staff, bearing no distinct character, and entrusted with no definite duties.

On our first arrival we went by invitation to stay with Mr. Richard Hunter, the collector of the station, who, with his kind and amiable wife, received us most hospitably.

After a few weeks we engaged a little bungalow in the military lines on the banks of the Mahanuddee, with

* Pukha—burnt brick.

pretty garden and convenient offices. The 66th Regiment of Native Infantry was posted there, and we found many pleasant friends among the officers.

After some months, my wife's father, Mr. John Palmer, came to visit us, and stayed for some time.

The peculiar circumstances connected with the failure of the great banking house of Palmer & Co., Mr. John Palmer's own noble and disinterested conduct, and the extraordinary respect and affection shown to him in his misfortunes, had shed a halo of moral glory around him, while his splendid abilities, pleasant manner, and intellectual gifts, rendered his society as delightful as it was improving.

In the month of May, circumstances rendering me anxious to bring my wife under the care of an experienced doctor, we resolved to return to Calcutta for a time.

For this purpose, having obtained private leave from Government, we all went down to Pooree, having once more been promised the assistance of a salt-sloop to take us to the Presidency.

When we reached Pooree the weather was so boisterous that the boatmen refused to venture across the surf. The sloop was at anchor on the outside, and for several days from hour to hour we watched it with longing eyes; but the boatmen were firm, and the awful height of the surf testified to the wisdom of their resolve.

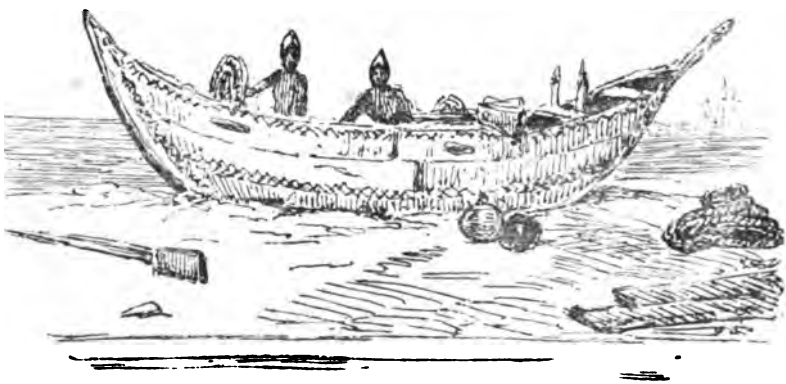
We were in despair, we knew that we could not expect the sloop to stay beyond a certain time, and had almost made up our minds to return to Cuttack and venture on the long and tedious dâk trip to Calcutta,

when the head boatman suddenly sent a message to say that the surf had slightly subsided, and if we would give him some money to buy a goat for sacrifice he would venture over.

All his conditions were immediately complied with ; we hurried down to the beach ; witnessed, I fear without much sympathy, the agonies of the sacrificial goat ; and took our seats in the massulah boat, victims, alas, of misplaced confidence.

Our party consisted of Sir Robert and Lady Colquhon, Mr. Binney Colvin, of the Civil Service, Mr. John Palmer, my wife and myself, and Lieutenant or Captain Bolton.

The massulah boat is peculiar ; it is sown together,



not having a nail in its construction ; the rowers sit on raised benches at one end of the boat, and the passengers and the steersman are elevated at the other end.

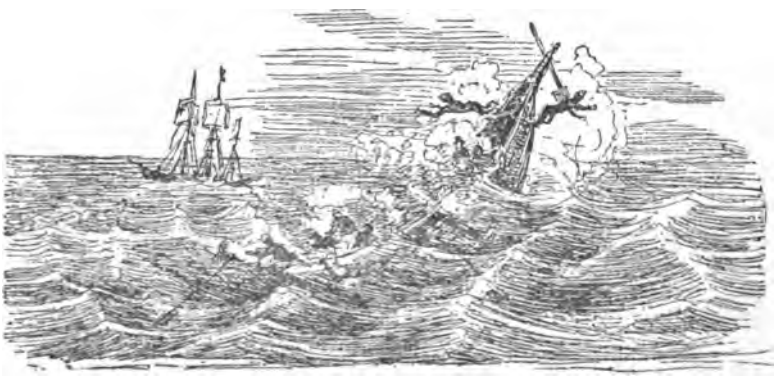
We took our seats, John Palmer, myself and wife, with our faces to the rowers, the great bar being in

front; between us and the bar were the other passengers fronting us.

The surf was roaring and dashing significantly, but we were hopeful of success.

After crossing the first wave or two with perpendicular plunges the ladies hid their faces, for the prospect was appalling; most fortunately I found a heavy box at the bottom of the boat, which afforded a firm rest and resistance to my feet, and this enabled me, by placing my arm round my wife's waist, to keep her firm in her seat, and prevent her being dashed against the bar!

Thus we went up and down by successive leaps, and when we had apparently just crossed the surf, Colvin and I called on my wife and Lady Colquhoon to look up, saying, "We are over." They believed us and looked up, but just as we spoke a monstrous wave rose slowly over our heads, a crest of white foam curdled on its summit, and the mass of water fell like a melted mountain upon us, throwing the steersman and every rower into the water.



The men flew out on both sides of the boat, as if projected by a catapult, screaming out, "Cooch parwa nuheen" (never mind), in the air as they went. When in the water they bravely swam towards the boat, and held on by the sides, but could not attempt to re-enter.

Here we were, then, in a raging surf, without oar or rudder, utterly helpless; but God was merciful, the great wave had struck us obliquely, the boat had swung round, and the tide had turned towards the shore.

Thus we were gradually carried to the land, at the same time drifting sidewards; every wave which struck us from behind rushed completely over us from stem to stern, taking away our breath, and almost our power of endurance.

Poor Mr. Palmer was thrown against the bar, and received a severe blow, and but for my box, which remained immovable, my wife, in her delicate condition, must have suffered severely. But we gradually approached the shore. As we drew near we saw a great crowd on the beach, evidently watching for us; our hopes revived, and after some further amount of unmerciful ducking, the boat dashed itself against the shore and split its sides. Gentlemen rushed into the sea; the ladies, breathless and exhausted, were carried, with dishevelled hair and tattered clothes, across the remaining water. We were saved; but the sacrificial goat lost caste. The next morning the sloop had disappeared.

Mr. Wilkinson, the collector, afterwards told us that during our immersion he had mounted his horse and ridden to the highest sand-hill, and even at that ele-

vation was unable to see the boat when it went under the water.

This was an unfortunate accident, but, like most human disasters, it might have been worse.

The residents had never witnessed such a catastrophe and several times they all thought we were lost.

But while we were thankful for our preservation, my poor wife had been terribly shaken, and her father was suffering from the blow in his chest.

As for me, my accidental box had prevented me from actual injury, and I was only anxious for the future.

The dâk trip back to Cuttack, and the whole way to Calcutta, was a formidable task for a lady in delicate health, and could hardly be contemplated with satisfaction, especially as our wardrobes had been carried off in the sloop!

We determined, however, to undertake it, and after a few days' rest with our hospitable host at Pooree, we started. The presence and aid of my wife's dear father was a source of continued comfort, and after stopping at the several stations *en route*, we reached the City of Palaces once more, and took up our abode at Spence's Hotel. This was the first hotel ever started in Calcutta, and was, in itself, a symbol and warning of the change which was then passing over Anglo-Indian society.

After a few days we thought it desirable to hire a separate house for our sojourn, and, as kind friends had contrived to obtain for me an acting appointment, the exact character of which I was never able to discover, and which was obviously invented by the "expansive benevolence" of the system to which I have before referred, we hired a comfortable house in Camac Street,

This second residence in Calcutta, which lasted only for a few months, though enlivened and cheered by the kindness of many friends and relations, was marked by no adventure or exceptional incident save the birth of a child, a girl, who first saw the light on the 20th August 1831.

My wife was attended in her illness by the well known Dr. Simon Nicholson, who delighted in the baby, and used to amuse himself and tease Mrs. Tayler by declaring it would have as long a nose as his own.

My principal amusement during this short sojourn was the early morning ride with my wife's brother, Sam Palmer, joint occupant of our house; we used to gallop across country every morning in search of jumps, intermediately practising over hedges and banks constructed in our own grounds.

Lord and Lady William Bentinck had gone up country, Sir Charles Metcalfe was acting as Governor-General in Lord William's place, John Elliott was absent, Mr. Palmer's gay and hospitable house was shut up, and he was, as I have before mentioned, occupying a retired little room in his son-in-law's, Mr. Sargent's, house. Almost all our fellow-passengers had left Calcutta, the young gentlemen for their appointments, the young ladies, perhaps, for disappointments; and their absence prevented the great city from retaining the same brightness as before. But the crows, the adjutants, the keranchees, and the mosquitos, had suffered no change; we had our loved little baby to nurse, and I had my pencil!

After a pleasant sojourn of some four months we left Calcutta, going as before by water to Pooree, on our way

to Cuttack, and carrying with us our new little treasure as a decoration for our humble home.

It was during this year that the first outburst of Mahommedan fanaticism, which subsequently obtained such perilous proportions during the Indian rebellion and mutiny of 1857, created a sensation in the immediate neighbourhood of Calcutta.

The following extract is taken from Dr. Hunter's *Our Indian Musulmans*:—

"Among the disciples of the Prophet in Calcutta, was a certain professional wrestler and bully, by name Titu Miyan. This man had started in life as the son of a respectable husbandman, and bettered his position by marrying into the family of a small landholder. But his violent and turbulent disposition threw away these advantages. For some time he earned an ignominious livelihood as a boxer in Calcutta, and afterwards enlisted in one of the bands of club-men with which the country gentlemen of Bengal were at that time wont to adjust their family differences and boundary disputes. This occupation finally landed him in jail. After his release he made a pilgrimage to Mecca, met Sayyid Ahmad in the holy city, and returned to India a powerful preacher of the faith. He itinerated in the districts north and east of Calcutta, making multitudes of converts, and preparing in secret God's vengeance against the infidel. The capture of Peshawar in 1830 by the fanatic host, emboldened Titu Miyan to throw off all disguise; and the petty oppressions to which the Hindu landholders subjected his followers, placed him at the head of an infuriated peasant rising. A series of agrarian outrages followed, ending in the insurgents entrenching them-

selves in a fortified camp, and defying and beating back the English authorities with some slaughter. The whole of the country north and east of Calcutta, including three entire districts, lay at the mercy of insurgent bands between three and four thousand strong. The sectaries began by sacking a village in open daylight, because one of the inhabitants refused to accept their divine mission. In another district a second village was plundered, and a mosque burnt down. Meanwhile contributions of money and rice were levied from the faithful; and on the 23rd October 1831, the insurgents picked out a strongly situated village for their head-quarters, and erected a bamboo stockade round it. On the 6th November they marched out to the number of 500 fighting men, attacked a small town, and after murdering the priest, slaughtered two cows (the sacred animals of the Hindus), with whose blood they defiled a Hindu temple, and whose carcases they scoffingly hung up before the idol. They then proclaimed the extinction of the English rule, and the re-establishment of the Muhammadan power. Incessant outrages followed, the general proceeding being to kill a cow in a Hindu village, and, if the people resisted, to murder or expel the inhabitants, plunder their houses, and burn them down. They were equally bitter, however, against any Muhammadan who would not join their sect, and on one occasion, in sacking the house of a wealthy and obdurate Musalman, varied the proceedings by forcibly marrying his daughter to the head of their band.

"After some ineffectual efforts by the district authorities, a detachment of the Calcutta militia was sent out on the 14th November 1831 against the rebels. The

fanatics, however, refused all parley, and the officer in command being anxious to save bloodshed, ordered his men to load with blank cartridge. The insurgents poured out upon us, received a harmless volley, and instantly cut our soldiers to pieces. All this took place within a couple of hours' ride from Calcutta. On the 17th the magistrate got together some reinforcements, the Europeans being mounted on elephants. But the insurgents met them, drawn up in battle array a thousand strong, and chased the party to its boats on the river, cutting down those who were slowest in the retreat.

"It now became necessary to deal with the rebels by means of regular troops. A body of native infantry, with some horse-artillery, and a detachment from the Body-guard, hurried out from Calcutta. The insurgents, disdaining the safety of their stockade, met the troops upon the open plain, with the mangled remains of a European, who had been killed the previous day, suspended in front of their line. A stubborn engagement decided their fate. They were driven back pell-mell into their entrenchment, and the fortified camp was taken by storm.

"Titu Miyan, the leader, fell in the action. Of the survivors (350 in number) 140 were sentenced by the Court to various terms of imprisonment, and one of them, Titu's lieutenant, was condemned to death."

CHAPTER IX.

CUTTACK, SECOND VISIT.

Start from Pooree and again reach Cuttack.—Resume our Residence in our little Bungalow.—My Official Position.—Neglect of Duty for the First Year.—Sudden Responsibilities.—Senior Officers ordered out of the Station, and Change of Officers entrusted to me.—My Dilemma.—How I met it.—Amlah: their Character and Powers.—Remarks on the Former Revenue Settlements at Cuttack.—Re-settlements required in 1834.—I am the first Officer appointed to the Duty.—John Master, the new Commissioner.—We take up our Position in Tents, at some distance from the Station.—Nature of my Duties.—Pleasant Recreation.—I am suddenly ordered to visit another Village, to report on the State of the Crops.—Reach my Destination.—Sensational Adventure.—Chase and capture of Murderer.—Return home.—Painful dereliction of Duty on the part of the Authorities.

AFTER a short rest of a day or two with some friends at Pooree, we again reached our old station Cuttack, receiving the congratulations of our friends on the additional human atom which we presented to them in the shape of our little daughter.

Once more settled in our pretty little cottage, we entered on a course of quiet domestic life, which (however the censorious may criticise Anglo-Indian habits) has as many charms in India as elsewhere.

As far as my professional duties were concerned, I had hitherto done literally nothing.

Being assistant to the commissioner, I had no specific duties allotted to me, as the magistrate's or collector's assistant had; but I sat decorously with my master on his bench, and was supposed to drink in his knowledge and experience at second hand. In reality, I chiefly occupied myself in taking private sketches of the figures which appeared before him, and which occasionally presented to my artistic view the most fascinating forms of picturesque or comic orientalism.

George Stockwell, the commissioner, though rather a grave and sedate man, was to me, at least, excessively kind; he could scarcely ever restrain a smile, even when on his bench, at my irreverent caricatures and comic annotations, and after a short time used generally to say, "There, you had better go to your wife, she will be wishing for you," an indulgent concession which I was not slow to take advantage of.

Thus passed, I am ashamed to say, the first few months of my so-called official life; speaking professionally, I was about as wise at the end of that time as at the beginning, a curious and not very creditable illustration, some may say, of the degenerate days fifty years ago, and a striking contrast between the lazy do-nothing civilian of 1830 and the energetic hard-working competition-wala of the present day.

This state of things, however, did not, as far as my

unworthy self was concerned, last for ever; a complete "change came o'er the spirit of my dream" in the cold weather of 1832, when an order was received directing the head officials, magistrate, and collector, to proceed into the interior of the district on special duty.

To my consternation and horror, I found that this arrangement would involve the transfer of the charge of both offices, with all the current duties, to unhappy and ignorant me, to whose blank official mind these duties were an unsolved enigma, a hidden mystery. There was no help for it, however, and in another month I found myself duly installed in ostentatious helplessness with the duties of the two departments in my hands, and a painful consciousness of neglect and unworthiness in my heart.

I did not, however, succumb to these sensations, or yield to despair, at the task before me,—a "happy thought" suggested itself.

Every one who knows anything of India is familiar with the name, if not quite alive to the characteristics of the "Amlah," that race of beings who, as ministerial subordinates to judge, collector, or magistrate, are ready alike to carry out their master's orders, or, what is more to their taste, introduce by plausible suggestions orders of their own: ill-paid, ill-chosen, charged with heavy responsibilities; not entirely powerless even under an able and vigilant superior; under an idle or incompetent one, all powerful.

Not absolutely endorsing the current stories of the judge who counted the flies upon the punkah before him, and pronounced judgment for or against, according as the flies were odd or even in number; or the other who,

under a secret understanding with his serishtehdar, regulated his decision of "decree," or "dismiss," by the order in which the ministerial officer asked the questions; and fully admitting that in the present day the Amlah are improved, and that occasional individuals are good and worthy men, while the public officers are more generally competent than they were,—I shall be compelled in honesty, and without malice, to give in the course of this narrative actual instances of incompetency on the part of judges of former days, which are truly painful, and of scoundrelism on the part of Amlah, which are astounding.

But to my tale. Fully realizing the discreditable position in which my ignorance involved me, I resolved to disclose my dilemma to the chief of these questionable counsellors. I therefore confessed to him my supreme ignorance of the duties which had suddenly devolved upon me, and told him that in every case that came before me for investigation, I should, after hearing the papers, ask him what orders were appropriate, and then pass those orders on his responsibility; that this I should continue to do for a short time till I made myself acquainted with my duties and the subjects disposed of, that I should then re-examine the orders passed, and if they were found to be unjust, or incorrect, I should hold him answerable.

This proved to be a wise though possibly an eccentric scheme, and I had no reason to complain that my confidence had been abused.

But the lesson was not thrown away. I felt ashamed of my past idleness, and henceforth devoted myself ardently to the study of my official functions; and it is

well that I did so, for the next year I was called upon to discharge an interesting and not very easy task.

The abuses under the original settlements in the province of Cuttack, had in former years become intolerable, and had in 1817 and 1819 culminated in a serious rebellion.

During the supremacy of the Mahrattas the revenue had not exceeded ten lacs; under the British Government it had risen first to twelve, and subsequently to fourteen lacs.

This condition of things, accompanied as it was by unlimited oppression, and the exaction of illegal taxes, terminated in an open rebellion, headed by a stalwart and courageous leader named Jugbundoo, which continued with various results until after the actual rebellion had been crushed. The Government then painfully convinced of the hardship and suffering caused by the unfair assessment, which had been made with the connivance if not by the direct action of the European officers, appointed in 1819 a Special Commissioner to revise the settlements and reduce the assessment.

The resolute Jugbundoo, however, still held out, but his authority and influence were recognised, and a more moderate assessment carried out.

Shortly after our arrival in the province the existing arrangement lapsed, a general re-assessment was required in 1834, and the conduct of the first settlement was entrusted to me.

During the interval between the recognition of my discreditable ignorance, and my deputation to undertake this difficult duty, interesting and important events had

occurred. Two years had elapsed since our return, and in each successive year—in September 1832 and December 1833—a son had been born, so that when we were about to start into the Mofussil (country) we had three children.

Our new Commissioner, Mr. John Master, who had succeeded George Stockwell, and was one of the kindest and most amiable of mortals, selected me for the duty, and in the spirit of extra benevolence chose for us a charming spot not very far from the station, and exerted himself to make us, children and all, as happy and comfortable as possible.

The position selected for our encampment was delightful, close by the old banks of an ancient tank, one of those large basins of water which the natives, wiser than ourselves, had excavated in ages gone by.

The tank had been evidently dry for centuries, and the banks were overgrown with deep jungle.

Settlement-making was a delectable occupation; every morning I set out with "Toby," my favourite bull-terrier, and my gun, superintended the measurement, and checked the accounts during the early hours, and then retired into the covers on the raised banks of the tank, bristling as they were with edible and unedible animals, partridges, quail, jungle fowl, deer, wild hog, and porcupines.

In the afternoon my wife usually joined me with a basket of sandwiches and wine, and we invariably secured a handsome bag, the contents of which would have astonished a European sportsman.

But this quiet daily occupation was not destined to pass without an adventure. One day I received an order from the Commissioner to visit some villages at a

short distance from our encampment, and report on the extent of injury alleged by the proprietor to have been sustained by the crops.

I accordingly took one of my smaller tents, several servants, "Rebecca" and "Rowena," my two favourite saddle-mares, and with my dog "Toby" started on my expedition.

The distance was some twenty miles, or two marches, so that having only one tent I was obliged to sleep at my first halting-place.

Our small encampment was pitched within a "tope" or grove of mango-trees, and as the spot was somewhat wild, we kept well together, horses and all, in our nocturnal arrangements.

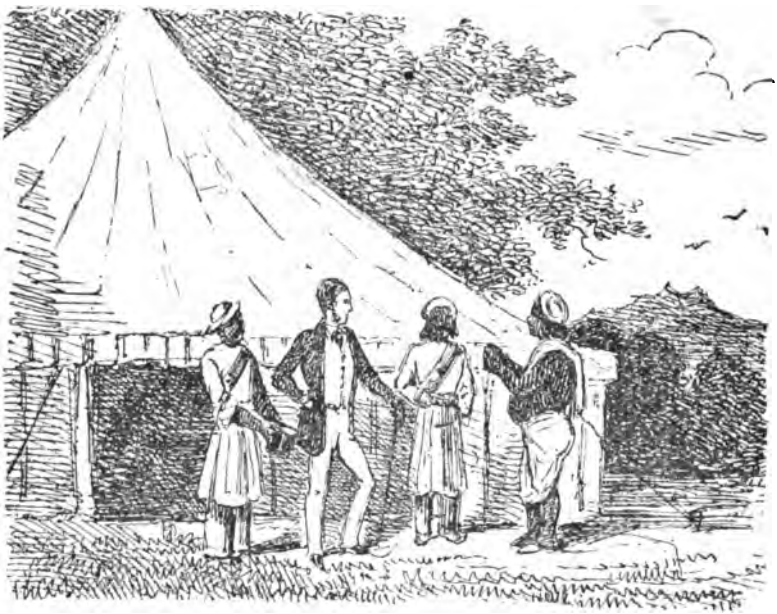
We were destined, however, to be disturbed; in the middle of the night my illustrious companion, who was sleeping in my tent, suddenly commenced a furious barking which nothing could allay, and at last, though very reluctantly, I got up and peered out of the door of my tent. I was just in time to distinguish a large leopard stealing away, followed by the shoutings and missiles of my "syces" (grooms), who had fortunately been awakened by Toby's bark in time to interrupt the beast's proceedings, which were evidently directed against my favourite steeds.

No further interruption occurred, and next morning, after breakfast, I marched to the place of my destination, where my tent was comfortably pitched on a piece of ground prepared by the "zemindar" (landlord), close to a large and clear tank of water.

The very next morning, while I was yet at breakfast, one of my chuprassies rushed into my tent, and with

joined hands informed me that the zemindar was outside, and anxious to speak to me without delay.

I at once rose and went out of the tent door, when I saw the fat proprietor of the village in the degagé costume of the country. He was evidently in a state of



excitement, and in hurried words, accompanied by nervous gesticulations, he informed me that a few minutes before, while he was standing at the edge of the tank, a man on horseback had approached the bank with the body of a child on the pummel of his saddle before him, that he was about to throw the body into the tank, when seeing him, he covered it over, and galloped off at full speed.

While he was still telling me the story, I ordered my syce* to saddle one of my mares, and tracing the footsteps of the man's horse from the spot, which the zemindar pointed out, I put "Rowena" on her mettle, and set off across country in pursuit.

The man had had at least ten minutes' start, so that for a long time he was out of sight, but after about a mile's gallop I suddenly caught a glimpse of him at a distance, and was just putting my mare at a ditch, when she suddenly stopped short, to my no little

discomfort, and instead of clearing the ditch, planted her feet and looked steadily into it; I leaned forwards over her shoulder, and to my horror, saw the body of a little

* Groom.

girl, clothed in blue, and evidently stone dead, lying at the bottom of the ditch.

Nothing could be done for the poor child, so I at once put the mare over a few paces from the spot, and resumed the chase; in a few minutes I could perceive that I was rapidly approaching my prey; his horse, which was white, with a scarlet cloth over his body, was clearly visible, and obviously flagging.

On, however, we both went, but when I was within some few hundred yards of him, he disappeared into a village. Following sharp, I entered the principal road, and was about to gallop down the street, when a native woman, standing before her cottage, suddenly made a sign to me, and pointed over her shoulder to a lane running at right angles to the road. I stopped at once, turned down the lane, and at a few yards' distance suddenly came in sight of the fugitive.

He was remarkably, I may almost say romantically,

handsome ; dressed in a suit of white, with a red cumerband (waistband), a scarlet turban, gracefully twisted round his head, with one end hanging down to his waist, and mingling with a single curl of coal-black hair ; his age may have been about thirty, he was tall, and peculiarly well formed.

I doubt not he felt somewhat queer when he first saw me, but he betrayed no symptoms of alarm ; he was sitting on the bank in a graceful attitude, with a horse-pistol in one hand and a large sword in the other ; his horse was quietly grazing by his side.

My position was somewhat critical ; the man was armed, and more than my match in bodily strength. I had nothing in my hand but a small riding-whip, and I had come such a distance from my tent, that none of my people could possibly join us for at least an hour, so I entered into a preliminary parley before taking action.

In answer to my questions regarding himself and child, he replied with assumed carelessness that he had been riding with his little girl, that she had fallen from the horse and the horse had kicked her, and he was on his way to fetch a doctor, having left the little girl behind that he might go the faster. While he was concocting this palpably absurd story, I was considering what I should do ; the dilemma was the pistol, and my mind was bent upon obtaining possession of it. Appearing, therefore, to accept his narrative without distrust, I said—

" Is that a pistol you have in your hand ? "

" Yes, my lord," said he.

" What, an English pistol ?"

" Yes, my lord, an English pistol."

"Show it to me, will you?"

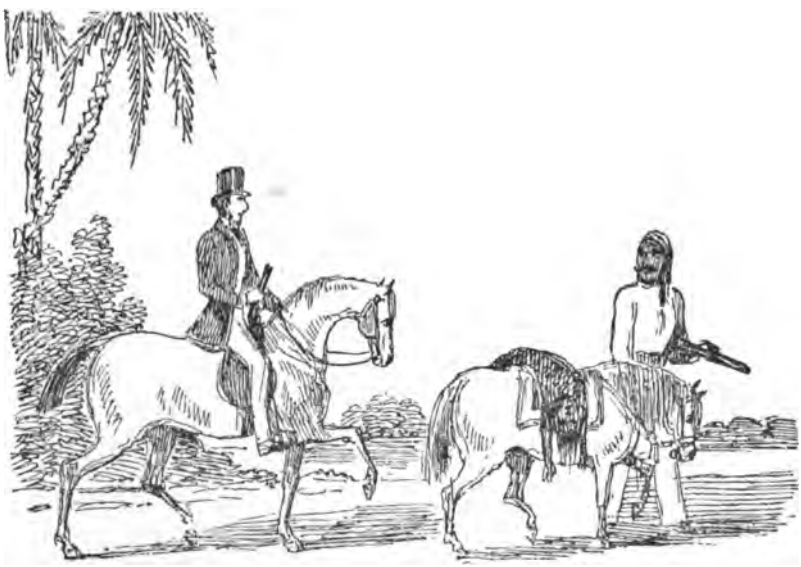
The man got slowly up, and still holding his large straight sword in his left hand, he came up to my side, with the pistol in his hand, with the muzzle unpleasantly turned towards me.

I then let "Rowena's" rein fall upon her neck, and stretched out my hand for the pistol, which he put forward, still holding it fast himself; the moment was critical, and my heart was in my mouth, but I felt, I knew not why, that the fellow could be cowed. While, therefore, I was apparently looking at the pistol, I suddenly seized it with my left hand, raising the muzzle as much as possible, and at the same time lifted up my riding-whip with the right, and called out in as fierce a voice as I could command, and with a sudden gesture, as

if about to strike, "Give it to me!" To my instant relief, I found him relax his grasp, and I got possession of the pistol. I felt it was an escape, but directly I examined the pistol, which was large, and with a brass nob at the end, the surrender was explained. The hammer of the pistol was injured, and the weapon was useless!

The subsequent proceedings were simple. Having no more the prospect of being shot, I told the scoundrel that I knew all about him; that I had seen the poor child lying dead in the ditch; that I was the magistrate's assistant, and that he must come with me to my tent.

He then took his horse by the bridle. I made him walk before me, taking care to watch his movements,



especially with the sword, which, however, was wrapped in cloth, and we started at a foot's pace for my tent.

When we reached the ditch where the murdered child lay, I told him to take it up and place it on the horse. The brutish roughness with which he handled the body was truly disgusting, but he was compelled to obey. Not long afterwards, as we drew near my encampment, I saw my chuprassees with other men approaching, and the crisis was past.

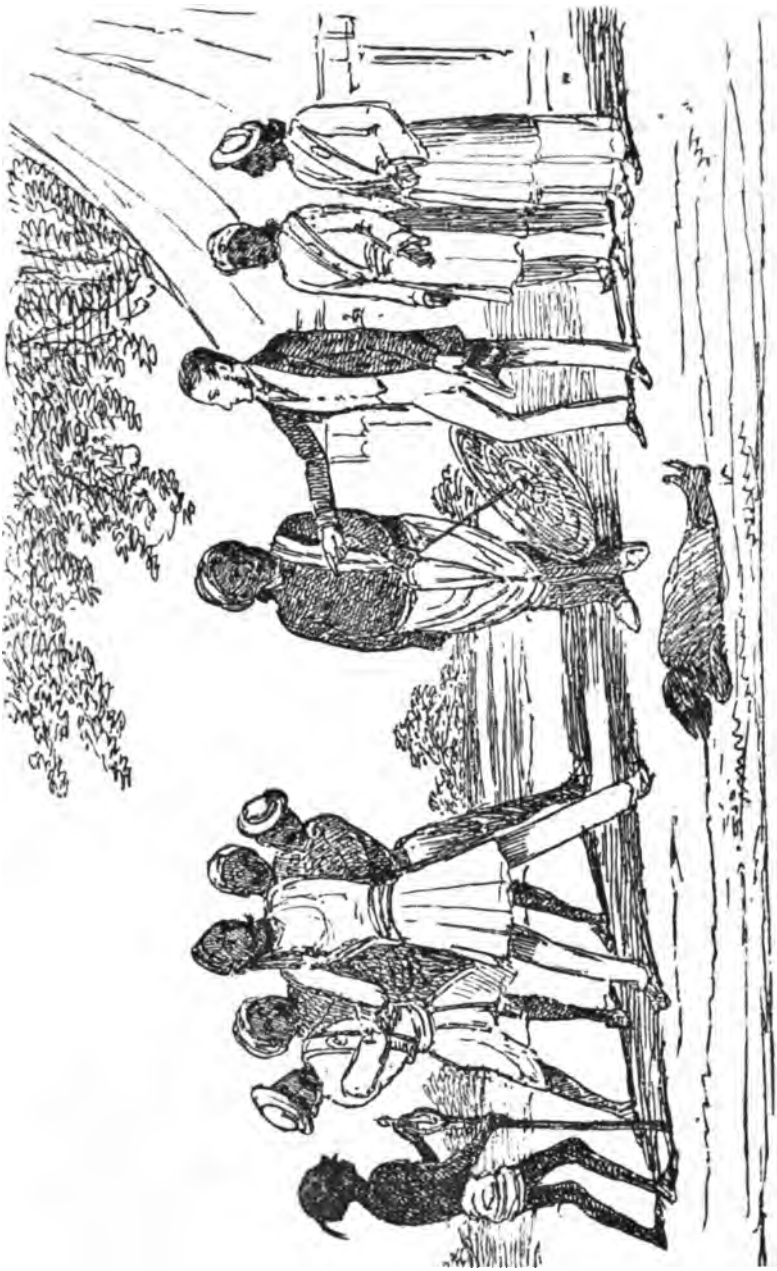
On reaching my tent, I immediately dismounted and examined the corpse of the unhappy child; there was still some warmth in the body, but I chiefly noticed a deep round hole in the temple with some extravasation of blood, and on placing the butt of the pistol over it, I found it exactly fitted the cavity, and was itself marked with blood.

No more evidence was required. I ordered the murderer to be bound, and sent him off in charge of the police, and several men supplied by the zemindar, to the station, writing a brief letter myself to the magistrate, and detailing the facts for his information.

The final scene, horrible as was the deed, had in it a mixture of the ludicrous.

The tall stature and fierce looks of the villain, with the knowledge of the savage deed he had committed, seemed to strike terror into the so-called guardians of the peace, the chokeydars, of which several were present, and had it not been for my presence, and the aid of my chuprassees, I feel convinced the murderer would have had no difficulty in escaping.

This was my first stirring adventure of the kind, but the sequel of the story is most noticeable.



Having informed the magistrates of the facts in my letter, I remained quiescent in the discharge of my settlement duties, daily expecting to be summoned to give my evidence, which would have been amply sufficient for the culprit's conviction; but the days passed, and I heard nothing for about a month. My settlement work being completed, we returned to the station, and a few days afterwards I was driving through the town of Cuttack with my wife, when she directed my attention to a man walking along the streets, saying, "Look at that man; who is he? I never saw so handsome a native." I looked, and to my astonishment I recognised, in the dignified and graceful figure, the murderer of the child! The fellow evidently knew me, and greeted me with a look of cold triumph.

On inquiry I found that the man with my letter had arrived at night; that the magistrate, probably half asleep, had sent him with the body to the doctor, who, roused from his bed, perhaps more than half asleep, dissected the child on the spot, discovered some internal disease, reported to the magistrate that she had apparently died from its effects, and the magistrate, accepting this report as final and satisfactory, at once acquitted the man.

The hole in the temple and bloody pistol were altogether unnoticed; my evidence, alone sufficient to hang him twenty times over, never sent for. The action of the assassin, his flight across country, the body thrown in the ditch; all was ignored. The child had a stomach-ache, and had died from its effects!

Never in the annals of official incompetency, was such a terrible failure of justice.

I even now have a vivid recollection of my indignation and disgust at this scandalous result. I had wished to make a complaint to the Sudder Court, but my more prudent and experienced seniors dissuaded me on the ground, sincerely entertained, that for a youngster like me to make so grave a complaint against a senior some twenty years older than myself, would be viewed with displeasure, and be prejudicial to my future prospects. I can hardly to this day understand how I listened to such advice.

In 1839, five or six years afterwards, I went to Cuttack as magistrate and collector, and on making inquiries regarding the handsome assassin, was informed that he had been arrested on some serious charge, but not, I suppose, thinking it likely that such another judicial farce could be enacted in one century, had committed suicide. "*Finis coronat opus.*"

CHAPTER X.

CUTTACK, SECOND VISIT (*CONTINUED*).

Important Controversy in Calcutta on the Subject of Education.—Victory of the English Party.—Tribute paid to the Character of Lord William Bentinck in the *Life of Dr. Duff*, lately published.—Extract from my Lecture on the Subject of Education.—Resumé of our Domestic Life at Cuttack.—My Bobbery Pack.—Toby.—His Character.—Adventure in the Drawing-room.—Toby's jealous Ferocity.—Alarm of Mrs. Tayler and Mrs. Repton.—"Hingun," my Native Whipper-in, is kicked over his Pony's head.—My little Monkey.—Change of Residence.—Temporary Occupation of a House at Chowleagunge with our Friends the Reptons.—Visit of Mr. Tyler from Madras.—Anecdote of Monkey and Sick Lady.—Leave Chowleagunge and take possession of a large Bungalow.—Various Adventures with "Entellus" Monkies.—Attacked by Madman.—My Narrow Escape.

DURING the four years from 1830 to 1834 the great struggle was being carried on in Calcutta between the "Orientalists" and "Anglicans," *i.e.* those among the leading officials who were desirous of introducing the

cultivation of the English language, and those who considered that Orientalism was sufficient to satisfy all reasonable aspirations.

There were "giants in those days." The leading men on the Anglican side were, first and foremost Dr. Alexander Duff, a man of whom it is impossible to speak too highly; Sir Charles Trevelyan, who had for years past devoted his energies to the great work of education; W. R. Mertins Bird, Holt Mackenzie, John Colvin, and the ever-memorable T. Babington Macaulay. The latter first reached India in 1834, and after a brief sojourn at Madras, for the purpose of consultation with Lord William Bentinck, then at the Neelgheree hills for his health, reached Calcutta and was installed as Legal Member of Council.

The principal men on the other side of the controversy were Horace Hayman Wilson, celebrated for his mental learning and general accomplishments, the two Prinseps, Thoby and James, and Longueville Clarke the well-known barrister. The controversy was carried on with great vigour, some passion, and no little bitterness for some years; but the victory, as was inevitable, was eventually achieved by the Anglican party, assisted by Lord William Bentinck, who took a deep interest in the question. Some idea of the strong feeling excited, may be formed from the fact that Longueville Clarke, the well-known lawyer, actually challenged the Rev. Alexander Duff to fight a duel! The controversy was, as all such controversies are, a struggle between past and future, between those who were satisfied with the limited acquirements and negative position of the more intelligent native, and spurned the ennobling prospects of a distant future.

And while serious arguments and occasional bitterness was freely interchanged, there were not wanting those who brought satire and facetiousness to bear on the controversy. The mistakes made by the half-educated and ambitious native, were not unfrequently of a ludicrous character, the perversions of English syntax and the awkward choice of doubtful synonyms being at times truly ludicrous.

One letter which appeared in the *Hurkaru* containing an imaginary repetition of the answers given at a supposed examination by some of the students, created so much amusement both among the English readers as well as the higher class of natives, that I here give it.

"SIR,

"As I feel convinced you are duly alive to the importance of national education in general, and *par excellence* to that of an intimate acquaintance with the *delicia* of Milton and Shakespeare. I have the pleasure to send you a report of some of the replies made by the constituents of young India, at the late examination, which you will find detailed in the *Hurkaru* of this morning.

"You will, I doubt not, republish the programme of the examinations, that your readers may have an opportunity of appreciating the literary attainments of the ambitious pupils. The subject selected was the speech of Hamlet, Act V., Sc. 2, which commences

'rashly,
And praised be rashness for it.'

The 1st question was—What is the action which is qualified by the adverb 'rashly'?

"To this Baboo Rasmoney Mullick, with a promptitude which astounded the assembly, replied, that the action was no doubt that of Hamlet's going on deck in his night-shirt, which he considered decidedly 'rash.'

"This reply exhibits not only much acumen, but, as justly

observed by a spectator, a greater sense of propriety than Hamlet himself appears to have possessed.

"2.—State in your own words what it is which Hamlet in this general reflexion points out as teaching us that 'there's a divinity that shapes our ends'?

"After some thought, Baboo Brindabun Dos, who up to this moment had been scratching himself, answered that he concluded Hamlet must have been reflecting on Lord Monboddo's theory, who holds that the Divinity shaped all our ends in the same way, viz. with tails, but that men have rubbed theirs off, whereas monkeys have not.

"This being quite an original idea, excited much admiration.

"The Baboo then further suggested that this interpretation was strikingly corroborated by the remark of Mr. Hamlet's very respectable father, 'the ghost,' who distinctly asserted in another interview that he 'could a tail unfold,' so that the train of argument naturally descended from father to son.

"The research of the promising student attracted great applause.

"The 3rd question, What is the meaning of 'stand a comma 'tween their amities,' caused some difficulty; one boy, with a snub-nose, suggested that the only expression of the kind he had heard, was 'stand a pot of beer.' For this vulgarism he was rebuked by Mr. H. V. Bayley, and looked very foolish. Another Baboo thought it might have some reference to mesmerism, as he had heard of several old women 'standing in a state of coma,' until Dr. Finch tickled them; but this interpretation not meeting with approval, the whole school came to a full stop on the 'comma' question, and no note of admiration was elicited.

"4. What is the meaning and grammatical construction of 'and many such-like as's of great charge'?

"This question was answered by a very buttery little boy with expressive eyes and a large stomach, Gudadhur Dos, who said that 'as's of great charge,' he supposed were dhobees'* donkeys, as they generally carried large bundles. What the grammatical construction of an ass was, he could not notably say, but would ask. A

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* Washermen.

thin lad began to mutter something about 'as in presenti,' but his mouth was full of pawn, and being unaccustomed to public speaking, I was obliged to leave the meeting before the matter was clearly elucidated; but I came away filled with delightful anticipations of the future, and found myself involuntarily humming 'Happy Land.'"

Ludicrous as this letter is, it points to a truth, under cover of absurdity.

Thoroughly as I myself appreciate the immense importance of the victory gained by the English party, I am strongly of opinion that the system has been carried too far in practice; though unquestionably sound in principle, it has been unwisely, if not mischievously applied to those to whom it was not only of little practical use, but who were actually injured by the discontent and dissatisfaction which the acquisition of English produced in their minds.

But this is a serious and important question, too comprehensive to be here discussed, though before my autobiography is completed I shall revert to the subject. In 1856 I endeavoured to deal to some practical purpose with it, by the organization of an industrial institution, in which those whose fortunes were likely to be independent of literary acquirements, might receive, in their own language, education suited to their lot.

The view taken by me on this subject was publicly explained after my return to England, in a lecture read by me before the East India Association, in 1871, and the following extract will explain the grounds of my objection to the unwise enforcement of English education on the rustic Oriental, the only effect of which is to create discontent and dissatisfaction with his present lot,

while it affords him no conceivable advantage in his daily life. The notes which I cited in the course of my lecture, created much amusement at the time, but the reasonableness of the argument was generally admitted.

Extract from my Lecture.

"The second defect which I would now desire to point out is the mistaken character of the actual instruction given, which, unless it be greatly changed, is, to say the least of it, painfully inappropriate, and in many respects not only useless, but prejudicial to the receiver.

"And here I cannot, I think, present the nature of the system more forcibly than by quoting a passage from the notes, written by me just after a visit of inspection to an ordinary middle-class school.

"The notes are not in such grave and formal language as is usual in an address, but they are graphic and were written immediately after the impression created by the scene.

"'We are in a Zillah school, containing 150 boys. Here is the second class, in which they are about to ask the nearest boy his name. It is Bujoo Das. What is he reading? But stay—let us first inquire who is Bujoo Das? What his position in life, what the prospects before him, what are his allotted duties? Bujoo Das is a very promising lad, quiet, intelligent and docile; his big bright inquiring eyes denote considerable intellectual aptitude, while his thin legs and large stomach equally indicate physical deficiency. He is the son of a small farmer, earning some forty rupees per annum from the proceeds of his farm, and who, having a

large and hungry family to support, screws with some difficulty the means for his son's schooling.

"'In the natural course of things the boy Bujoo would succeed to the paternal farm, carrying on his rustic operations in precisely the same way as his father, grandfather, and remote ancestors for fifty generations, varying, perhaps, his peaceful and insipid pursuits with an occasional spice of litigation with his own tenants or neighbouring land-holders, but in all probability passing quietly down into the valley of shadows, *more majorum*; unlettered certainly, but without much guile; ignorant of all history, ancient and modern, but temperate withal, and quite satisfied with tepid water out of his ancestral lotah for his daily beverage. Of poetry innocent, but contented with his lot. Tenderly careful of his old father, if alive, affectionate to his children, and generally kind to his wife, although he would perhaps beat her if the vegetable curry was not well cooked, or if his hookah is not ready when he returns from the field. Such is Bujoo in his present condition, such would he be in his future uninterrupted incidents.

"'Well, we have got him as he is into our Zillah school, and are educating him.

"'He is about to read; his brown finger has got fast under a line, his eyes are dilated, and he seems preparing to swallow book and all at a gulp. Let us hear what he is learning under our auspices.

"'"Go, rose, my Chloe's bosom grace;
How happy should I prove,
Might I supply that envied place
With never-fading love!

There, Phœnix-like, beneath her eye,
Involved in fragrance, burn and die.
Know, hapless flower, that thou shalt find
More fragrant roses there;
I see thy withering head reclined
With envy and despair."

"'Here Bujoo, who has read right through the stanza without a stop, pulls up with a long breath, and a look of panting exultation.

"'And here, perhaps, I may pause and exclaim, not in exultation, but in sadness of heart: "Unhappy Bujoo, ill-fated boy! Is it for this you have left your father's rustic roof, and toiled some three years and more in mastering the most difficult of foreign languages, to be bewildered, if not corrupted, by amorous metaphors and jingling love ditties?" What possible right has Bujoo, the mild brown boy, to wish himself a rose in Chloe's bosom? What is Chloe to him, or he to Chloe? Bujoo, himself about eleven, married an infant of two years old some years ago, because Bhugwan Das, his father, and Goluk Chunder, the infant's father, so arranged it; she is now ten, and has just had her nose bored; they will soon live together as man and wife. She will make his curry and prepare his hookah. He will shut her up as if she were a favourite cow, and occasionally beat her; but as for "never-fading love" poor Bujoo never dreamed of such a thing. Even for an English rustic these amorous poems would be of very questionable utility, but to a native they are worse than useless. They can convey no meaning or ideas whatever, except what are corrupting; for love innocent and pure, with all its

sentiments and tender fancies, is a thing foreign to his nature and habits.

"'Under a Hindoo view of the passage "burning and dying involved in fragrance" (of a peculiar kind), may be connected with each other, and, therefore, may convey some definite meaning, though certainly not the poet's, to this poor bewildered stripling. But involved in fragrance! What fragrance will he ever be involved in during his lifetime, save that of garlic or cardamums? What resemblance has he to a phœnix? And is he not far more likely to find his amusement when he is not beneath the eye of his "Chloe," than when Mrs. Bujoo has him under her ken? Seriously speaking, is not the incongruity, the absurdity of filling little native boys with this rhapsodical nonsense, worse than ridiculous? Is it not positively mischievous and worthy of reprobation? I appeal to any sensible man, whether there be anything like fitness in thus dealing with a rustic lad whose lot is cast in the field or the workshop?'

"Thus far my notes—written some years ago—to the purport of which I still unreservedly adhere.

"While, however, this mistaken scheme of education has been in progress, and borne its unsatisfying fruit, it is gratifying to find that some thinking men have seen the evil, and suggested the remedy.

"George Campbell, now happily made Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, in his admirable work *India as it may be*, has forcibly pointed out some of the very abuses described, and has strongly advocated the substitution of useful knowledge and practical science.

"The Committee appointed in 1856 referred to the same subject, and several writers in reviews and news-

papers have at different times exposed the barren and unprofitable results of the present system.

"There is, therefore, every reason to hope some more sound, healthy, and sensible system will ere long be adopted, and the mischief which has for years been spreading like a canker be changed for what is useful and good.

"Mr. (now Sir George) Yule, a Bengal civilian, pre-eminently distinguished for his knowledge of the people, and his sound and practical views on all subjects of administration, some years ago recorded his opinion of the system in the following emphatic words: 'I look upon the education afforded by the Mofussil Government schools with contempt, and I know no one who does not do the same.' While about the same time the Government of India, itself somewhat bewildered with the difficulties before it, endeavoured in vain to obtain from the local Bengal Government—equally, if not more bewildered—what they more than once officially and urgently demanded, viz. a comprehensive report on the system to be adopted for the education of the people, in accordance with the principles set forth in the Court's despatch of 1854."

On the 7th March 1835 a decree was passed by Lord W. Bentinck as Governor-General in Council, of which the concluding sentence declared—

"4thly. His Lordship in Council directs that all the funds which these reforms will leave at the disposal of the Committee, be henceforth employed in imparting to the native population a knowledge of English literature and science, through the medium of the English language."

This decree formed a worthy finale of the career of this truly great man, to whom Dr. Smith in his late *Life of Alexander Duff*, a copy of which has been kindly presented to me by the family, paid the following worthy tribute :—

"Born in 1774, he was sixty-five years of age when his ripe experience was lost to a country and a ministry which preferred to the wise Metcalfe a place-hunter like Lord Auckland.

"But heaven takes vengeance on a land for preferring the political partisans of the hour to its trusty good and great statesman. The equally noble Lady William, renowned in the east for her Christian charities, was the second daughter of the first Earl of Gosford, and survived her husband till May 1843. This great Governor-General's epitaph was written by Macaulay, in the inscription which covers the pedestal of the statue erected opposite the town-hall of Calcutta, by grateful natives and Europeans alike: 'To William Cavendish Bentinck, who during seven years ruled India with eminent prudence, integrity, and benevolence; who, placed at the head of a great empire, never laid aside the simplicity and moderation of a private citizen; who infused into Oriental despotism the spirit of British freedom; who never forgot that the end of government is the welfare of the governed; who abolished cruel rites; who effaced humiliating distinctions; who allowed liberty to the expression of public opinion; whose constant study it was to elevate the moral and intellectual character of the government committed to his charge: this monument was erected by men who, differing from each other in race, in manners, in language, and in religion, cherish

with equal veneration and gratitude the memory of his wise, upright, and paternal administration.' "

With Dr. Duff himself, the great regenerator, and leading champion in this great struggle, I was not personally acquainted until many years afterwards, when his feelings of indignation were warmly excited by the unrighteous treatment which I met with in 1857.

The intimacy which arose after this intercourse, and the correspondence which ensued, will be given in the second volume of this work. I need scarcely say what deep consolation I found in the sympathy of so great a man.

And while these grave discoveries were progressing in Calcutta, deeply affecting the future prospects of India, we were ourselves resting in the quiet and unsensational enjoyment of domestic peace in our distant province.

It was during this interval, that, having little else to do, I first organized my " bobbery " pack, a collection of some twenty-five or thirty dogs of all descriptions, the head of which was a wonderful bull-terrier which I had purchased from Mr. Brownlow, a fellow-civilian, and which was without exception the most perfect specimen of canine amiability and intelligence I ever met with ; combining imperturbable gentleness with the most indomitable courage, yielding with inimitable grace and good humour to the caresses of the children, if he heard the voice of a distant pariah dog, he would start off, and after a short interval return with a grin of satisfaction on his face as if nothing had happened, resume his place, and re-invite the caresses of the children, whilst a tell-tale stain of blood about his mouth revealed the secret that he had killed the pariah.

"Toby" was the only dog I ever met with who could accomplish such a feat.

But it was not in these qualities only that he was famous. He was equally at home when officiating as leader of my pack, or acting in the rôle of a pointer out shooting.

In the former capacity he would enter the cover, and on scenting the jackal give tongue, not so harmoniously, but quite as effectually as a hound; in the latter so perfect was his bearing and perception that I could with his assistance always back my gun against any two of my friends.

He was, in short, a dog of dogs beyond all comparison.

When first I got possession of Toby he shared our affection with a dear little creature of my wife's, named Flora, and he did not grudge to the little one her portion of endearment.

But when I commenced the gradual collection of the outsiders, a "change came o'er the spirit of his dream," and jealousy made him decidedly dangerous.

When actually running after the jackal, he took no notice of the intruders; but during the intervals of quiescence, he was always ready and eager to have it out with any he might meet.

I had therefore to take the utmost care, and separate the *profanum vulgus* from his sight; so I constructed a regular kennel in which the pack was kept and fed within a separate yard, and Toby was only conscious of their presence from the distant barking.

Once, however, a most sensational scene took place in our drawing-room. We were sitting at the table; our friend Edward Repton, a civilian whom I had

known in England, myself, and our two wives, each in possession of their first treasure, a little baby! Toby the Great was comfortably snoring at my feet! It was peace and pleasantness; the caresses of the young mothers, and the infantine responses of the babes, forming the principal feature of the family drama.

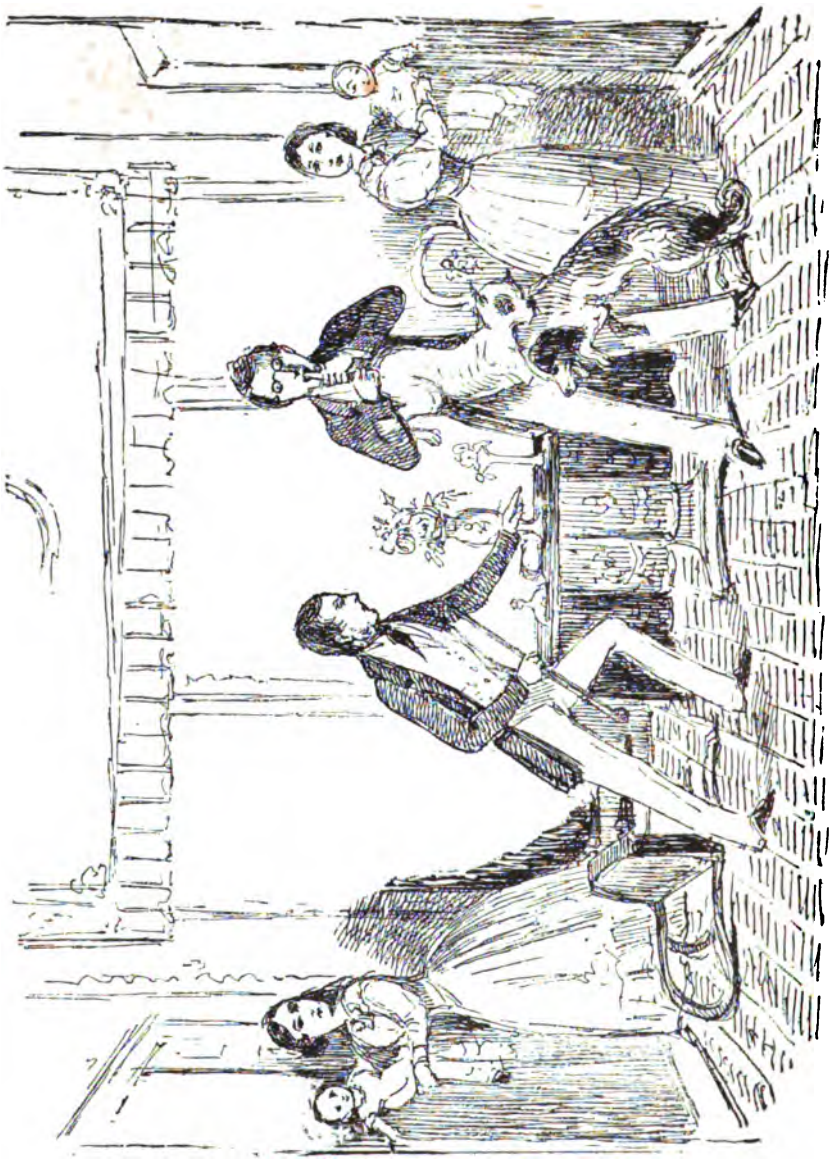
Suddenly and without any notice, one of the bobbery, a large cross-bred sort of setter, having escaped from the kennel, came quietly to the open door and entered the room; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, Toby, with a rush, had seized him by the throat! The mothers sitting on either side of the table, started up, babies in their arms, and rushed to the opposite doors in agony.

I seized a stick and belaboured Toby, but to no effect; the stranger was nearly done for, with Toby's powerful jaw fixed immovably on his throat, when Repton boldly seized him by the tail, crammed it into his mouth, and bit it unmercifully.

Being a tall man and standing up straight, Toby's whole body was in the air, but he still hung on, the unhappy stranger gurgling and struggling as in his last moments; but nature interfered; the mysterious connection of the tail with the muscular organization of the throat, at last had its effect. The half-eaten dog dropped on the floor, and with trembling legs escaped destruction.

Toby, still held back by Repton until his victim had escaped, was then released, and looked up with smiling innocence in his face, but doubtless secret satisfaction in his heart.

The scene was picturesque if not sensational.



The bobbery pack, with its organization and equipment, was itself a source of constant amusement.

My whipper-in was a little Hindoo lad of some twelve or thirteen years of age. I dressed him in a red jacket, tops and cords, with a black velvet cap; the difficulty was his hair. He wore it long and hanging over his head, like a girl, and being of the lowest class (a mathur, or sweeper), no barber would touch him, so I had to cut his hair myself.

He used to ride a lovely little pony called "Cherry," and after due instructions and practise in jumping, became a capital rider. I made several artificial banks and hedges in the grounds, and Repton used to stand with me, one on either side, and flog the pony as he came up to jump, occasionally to the discomfiture of the rider, but with very satisfactory ultimate results.

The only misfortune that happened was on the first day on which he joined the hunt.

We were all waiting on the borders of a rice-field; Toby with the other dogs were inside; suddenly he gave tongue, and was joined by some of the others. A jackal stole out just opposite the boy, and the dogs rushed after him. Cherry was excited; first reared, and then giving a tremendous kick, threw the poor boy clean over his head, and then, joining the party, accompanied us through the run in evident delight, and doubtless happier without his rider.

One of the members of our family was a delightful little monkey, which had been given to us by a young civilian friend, Mr. Metcalfe. This accomplished little creature was a character; he was, when given us, dressed in a little red livery, and would sit upright and still, and with the utmost gravity, behind us in carriage or buggy, and at dinner time squat on the arm of my chair, watching our proceedings with apparent indifference, and accepting with quiet gratitude any morsel that was offered him.

But he was not always amiable. One day he was quietly picking some fluff from my wife's silk stocking, when, frightened or offended by some movement she made, he made a sort of savage grimace at her, and was only prevented from attacking her by a seasonable kick from myself.

From that moment he conceived a sort of prejudice against her, and never lost an opportunity, when unobserved by me, of making faces and threatening gestures at her.

This unamiable disposition led to his removal to a little cage of his own at the top of a long bamboo pole; a position which one day led to a most ludicrous scene.

Close to the monkey's pole was another, to which was attached by a rope a large squirrel, with a long and bushy tail. Being just within reach, the little monkey frequently entered into communication with his neighbour, and his great delight was to get possession of his tail, the effect of which was, after a time, to wear a great portion of the hair off.

One day, to Jacko's evident delight, a little puppy came within his reach at the moment he was larking with the squirrel. The monkey was equal to the occasion, and while he held the squirrel with his left hand, he simultaneously seized the puppy's tail with his right, and then

danced round and round with his two victims, to his own ecstatic delight, but to no little disgust on their part.

After some two years' residence in our little bungalow, we became ambitious of a larger domicile; that in which we were living, besides being small, was within the military lines, a fact which subjected us to sundry trifling inconveniences. The inhabitants also had been increased, and extra room required by the addition of two children, a daughter and son, the first of whom had been born on the 20th of August 1831, in Calcutta, and the second, my eldest son Skipwith (now a judge in India), on the 28th September 1832.

Although, therefore, we had no little affection for our small "cottage ornee," which had first received us, we made arrangements for leaving it.

At this juncture our valued friends Mr. and Mrs. Repton had come to sojourn for a time at Cuttack, Mr. R. having obtained an appointment. We accordingly arranged what in India is called a "chummery," and for that purpose hired jointly a charming house situated near the race-course, at a place called Chowleagunge, and I may truly say passed a most pleasant time. Edward Repton, the son of the Rev. Mr. Repton, I had known in England, as well as his wife before her marriage. I had also met him at Pooree several years before, when I had gone there for change of air after my fever, and it was with no slight gratification that we availed ourselves of the opportunity of renewing our acquaintance, and the pleasure was enhanced by the mutual attachment which took place between my wife and Mrs. Repton. It was during our sojourn in the

house at Chowleagunge, that an amusing tableau took place.

We were a merry party, and in search of amusement, so I projected what might be termed a "take in" for the community. We issued invitations for a ball, giving out that we expected an old friend of Mr. Repton, of the name of Mr. Tyler, from Madras, who would probably arrive on the night fixed.

Our guests arrived in due course, and when all had assembled, the sound of a palankeen, accompanied with the customary shouts of the bearers, was heard approaching the door. I exclaimed, "That is Mr. Tyler, evidently," and ran out of the door with Repton to meet and conduct him at once to his room. When I got outside I rushed to my dressing-room, shaved off part of my whiskers, put on a wig and pair of spectacles, dressed myself in a suit of white, with short jacket, and a pillow under m

waistcoat, and when all was ready went out into the drawing-room with Repton, who introduced me with due formality to my wife, who gravely greeted me with great, though distant cordiality, as an old friend of Mr. Repton's.

Not a soul in the room recognised me, and I passed the whole evening as Mr. Tyler.

The entire affair was a great success, and at the close of the evening when I revealed myself, several refused to believe the trick, declaring they had seen me and Mr. Tyler in the room together.

One practical lesson I learned from the proceeding, viz. that we should be extra careful of the remarks we make on our neighbours. Again and again, as I strolled round the room and looked at the pictures, I heard: "What an old guy! Look at his jacket! Is this a specimen of the Madras civilian?"

On the expiration of our Chowleagunge "chummery," we hired a larger bungalow. Mr. George Brown, the judge, had previously occupied this house, with his wife and Mrs. Chinnery, his wife's mother, widow of the great Anglo-Indian artist. It was a spacious and most comfortable residence, half way between the military lines and the city.

But before I relate any further adventures in this new residence, I must revert once more to our little bungalow, which, after we left it, was the scene of an amusing farce, enacted by another of the monkey tribe.

One day, the wife of an officer who had succeeded us in the possession of the cottage, Captain Smyth, of the Engineers, was lying on the couch in her drawing-room, weak from illness. The outer door was open, as servants

were near, and all was still and quiet, when a monkey took it into his head to enter the room, and evidently not observing the recumbent lady, amused himself by springing up to the top of the punkah, which, as is always the case in hot weather, was suspended from the roof.

His delight was great when he found that his weight on the top and the see-saw motion of his body produced the undulating movement peculiar to the punkah, and

still unconscious of the lady's presence, he commenced a regular swing, with his back turned to her, but in another moment, while she, too weak to move, and too much alarmed to speak, was watching his movements in speechless agony, he turned himself round, and in the next moment caught sight of her.

Unabashed, if not exultant at the sight, he fixed his eyes upon the unhappy lady, and each time that the swinging punkahs approached her, stooped down, grinning, and uttering the peculiar noise which monkeys only know how to make.

The poor lady remained for some time in this painful condition, afraid to move or call, and never knowing when the brute might be tempted to molest her, till at last a servant entered the room, and the volunteer balancer took his departure.

But these escapades were exhibited by the smaller species of monkeys.

The freaks of the larger animal, *Entellus semnipothecus* were more serious. The Entellus (called Hunooman by the natives), is the sacred monkey of the Hindoos, and nowhere, perhaps, in India, is he to be found in greater numbers than in Cuttack.

A few days before we took possession of our new bungalow, when the house was still in the occupancy of the Judge, the family, one Sunday, returning from church, found the principal dressing-room appropriated by Mrs. B., in a state of utter confusion—a large cheval glass upset and broken, and other articles of furniture scattered about.

A small company of the Entelluses had been in the room, and, evidently seeing their sacred faces in the glass

had been enjoying a scrimmage which it would have been worth something to have witnessed.

And we were not long settled in our new abode before I was brought into unpleasant collision with these sanctified quadrumans!

Being enthusiastic in the matter of flower-gardens, I commenced laying one out on a large and ambitious scale. At the bottom of the garden was a group of tall mango-trees, and, whether from mere perversity, or from some unknown cause of attraction, a very short time after the commencement of my labours a troop of these monkeys, day after day, appeared among the trees, evidently watching the operations in progress. At first, their presence, being principally confined to the trees, in no way interfered with business, and I took an interest in observing their movements; but, after a short time, they commenced an entirely new system of amusement, descended the trees, entered the gardens, pulled the shrubs about, tore off leaves, poked about the beds, and committed no end of havoc.

One old gentleman carried his obstruction to an extraordinary extent, and, annoying as his presence was, it was impossible not to be amused at his superabundant insolence and exceptional cheek.

He would take up his position day after day on the lower horizontal branch of a large mango-tree, and there he remained, indifferent to all threats and intimidation; and this led to a delicious *denouement*.

I have already mentioned "Toby," my unparalleled bull-dog: when the nuisance of these sacred Entelluses began to be annoying, Toby had interested himself in making occasional raids upon the intruders, but with little

effect, and he seemed quite distressed by his failures. One day I was standing with him by my side, when we observed our defiant old friend take his seat as usual on the branch. As he allowed his tail to hang down, it struck

me, and I veribly believe it struck Toby also, that, although his body was out of reach, his tail might be grabbed. I spoke in a low tone to Toby; he seemed to understand, crouched down, and very gradually approached the tree. Entellus remained immovable, and apparently unconcerned, and the tail continued to hang temptingly down! Suddenly, Toby made a des-

perate rush, and dashed at the tail. Everything bespoke a triumph long delayed. Alas! alas! The venerable monkey never moved, but, as Toby's open mouth turned upwards to seize, at least, the tail, he quietly, but at the proper moment, lifted it up with his left hand, as a gentleman would raise his coat-tail to enjoy the fire, and, stooping slightly forward, gave Toby a pleasant box on the ear with his right, looking at him as he passed by, unable to stop his career at once, with calm and satirical indifference.

The most amusing part of this adventure is that it was, after this rehearsal, repeated more than once, and I can still vividly recall the calm, philosophical indifference of Entellus the calculating advance of the impassioned and yet baffled Toby, the repeated rush, the quiet elevation of the tail, and the insulting pat on the gasping cheek—all I can recall, as it were yesterday.

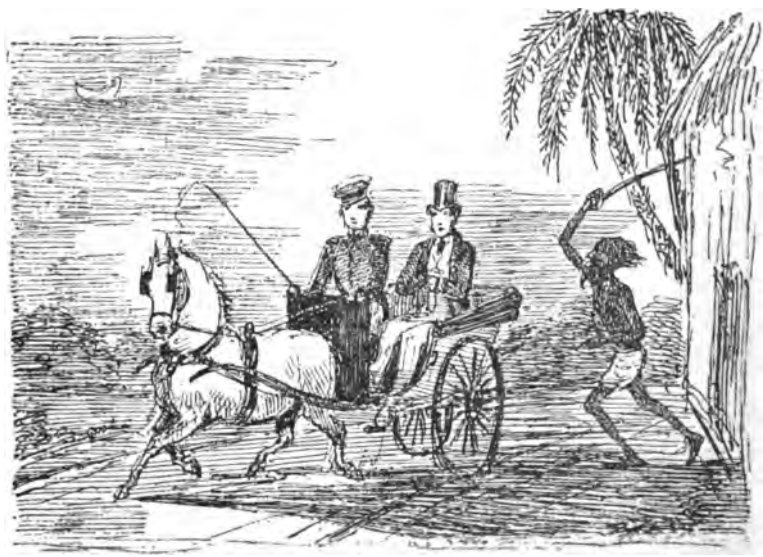
But this "Entellus" drama was, after a time, brought to a somewhat tragic termination. Their inroads had become so frequent and destructive, that my unhappy garden, the joy of my heart, and the occupation of all my leisure hours, was just going to the dogs, and all other efforts having failed, I was driven to the determination to shoot one of these offending monkeys. The deed was most distasteful, but "necessity has no laws," and one day, when the invading group had taken up their customary position at the top of the mango-trees, preparatory to their destructive excursion, I singled out one and shot! He was struck, but not killed, poor creature, and as he fell from branch to branch, his struggles were painful to behold. When he reached the ground, his action was so exactly like that of a human

being, that it was dreadful to witness, and I at once put a stop to his agonies by a second shot.

The scene was distressing, but the remedy was effectual; the monkeys never re-appeared, my flower-beds recovered their beauty, and Toby's patience was not tried again.

A personal adventure of a different character occurred about this time, which might have been fatal to my Indian career; and as it is to some extent characteristic of a certain unpleasant species of fanaticism, not unfrequent in India, it is worthy of record.

One evening, I was going out to dinner at the military mess in the Cantonments, in company with a friend, Captain B. He was driving, and I was on the left side of the buggy. As we passed an old elephant-shed, a man suddenly rushed out with a drawn sword, and struck



savagely at me! Had the blow taken effect it might have been fatal, for it was delivered perpendicularly from above my head, with the full force of the striker; but providentially the man had not taken the movement of the buggy into calculation, and the weapon just missed my head, and struck violently on the side of the buggy behind my back, making a deep indentation into the leather.

My companion was so alarmed at the accident, that he immediately whipped the horse, with a view to escape; but this did not suit my views, so I seized the reins, stopped the horse, jumped out of the buggy, got possession of a bamboo stick which was outside a cottage door, and ran back in hopes of catching my assailant; but the fellow had already been arrested by a Sepoy who was on guard at the shed, so I returned to the buggy, and we continued our drive to dinner.

The next day inquiries were made, the man was discovered, or was *said* to be a madman, and nothing, as far as I can remember, was done.

CHAPTER XI.

CUTTACK (*CONTINUED*).

Great Inundation.—Alligator caught in the Jackal-trap.—Birth of our Second Son and Daughter.—Carolus Graham and William Vansittart.—Sporting Anecdotes.—Accident with Boy Beaters.—Leopard.—Johnny Master-Commissioner.—Reminiscences of Old Friends.—Colonel Campbell.—Sir Arthur Becher. — Major Bankes. — Colonel Martin and Others.—Captain Festing's Escape from Tiger. — The Romantic Doctor.

In the year 1834 Cuttack was visited by a terrible inundation. Situated, as I have before shown, in the bifurcation of the two great rivers, the Muhanudee and Katjoree, the city is specially exposed to any unusual overflow of either; on this occasion both rivers rose high above their usual level, and after embracing each other at their meeting, united their forces and flowed back on the devoted town.

The way in which the catastrophe was first discovered was singular. We had some time before changed our little bungalow in the military lines for a far larger house

with a spacious garden attached, in which I had taken great interest, foolishly spending no little money on its decoration and culture.

One morning, having just risen from bed, I looked out of the window and observed some of the fields just beyond my garden partially immersed in water; as I looked more carefully I clearly perceived the water gradually rising, and apprehending that some might enter my new garden, which I had just been laying out, and regarded with supreme affection, I sent for some coolies and commenced raising a small embankment of earth, hoping to keep the water outside. Vain hope! before two hours had passed, my garden was one uninterrupted sheet of water, and I was myself shortly afterwards punting over my choicest flower-beds in a large flat-bottomed boat.

The inundation was in fact a terrible one. My wife had to hasten her toilet, as the water, having filled the grounds, was rapidly rising inside the rooms of our house, though situated at the top of the slope, and we had to be dragged in our carriage (a barouche) half an hour afterwards by coolies, the water reaching half-way up the wheels, to an elevated spot where the public offices were situated. Here we found half Cuttack assembled, for the waters were out everywhere. Such a scene of confusion, noise, and turbulence was seldom witnessed, and is impossible to describe. In truth, it was an awful scene, especially to those who knew that the whole town and station lay, in fact, many feet below the level of the great rivetment which, built years ago by the Mahrattas, confined the great bed of the Mahanudee river; and still more particularly to myself, who had the night before

visited the town, and discovered that in several places the wall of the rivetment was to all appearance likely to give way.

Meanwhile, the whole country for miles around was one sheet of water; the beds of the rivers were rushing down, carrying with them huge trees, helpless cattle, roofs of houses, and all the miscellaneous *débris* of swamped villages.

In the midst of this terrific turmoil, I was told that there were, in one or two spots, small clusters of houses built upon elevated ground, which, though not yet overflowed by the water, were being rapidly surrounded; that the water was rising every instant, and the inhabitants—men, women, and children—were in the utmost danger. I procured, as quickly as possible, a large flat-bottomed boat, and, collecting several men, embarked upon it, and after some labour, and one or two trips backwards and forwards—on one occasion crossing my own garden, where not even the top of a shrub was any longer visible—I had the intense satisfaction of rescuing all who were in danger.

We passed that night at the cutcherry (office) in which we had taken refuge, amidst cries and howling, confusion of tongues, and agglomeration of unpleasant smells. I may safely say with the Duke of Clarence, "I would not pass another such a night, so full of fearful sounds, &c., for a considerable premium." The only consolation was, that, the building being on elevated ground, we were safe from the surrounding ocean.

By the next morning the waters had partially subsided. We ventured to our house, though the roads were still under water, and found the verandah of our

bungalow swarming with frogs and snakes, and the traces and smells of the invading river pervading the house. But danger was passed, the mud wall had not yielded, and we had leisure to dry ourselves.

One amusing little incident, which occurred shortly after the inundation, I must note before closing this portion of my tale.

I had been in the habit of setting a trap to catch jackals, to secure them for our bobbery pack; the trap was roomy, so that the captive might have space to stretch his legs, and thus be game for a good run.

One morning my bearer came into my room with an astonished face, telling me that there was a mugger (alligator) in the trap. I went out, and true it was. An enticing shoulder of mutton had attracted the creature, who had evidently taken possession of our tank since the inundation. He had gone head-foremost in, and the door closed on him, so there he was, with his head and the fore part of his body in the trap, and his tail sticking out, utterly helpless, as the scales of his body prevented his retreat.

The situation was unique and supremely ridiculous, as far as the ill-fated alligator was concerned; a sort of realization of Mrs. Malaprop's "Allegory" on the banks of the Nile; but we were not sorry for the capture, as this identical mugger had, we believed, a day before, carried off a little pet spaniel while swimming in the tank. A rope was therefore obtained and fastened to the captive's tail, the door was lifted, he was dragged out, and dispatched with as little suffering as possible.

This was the last adventure at this watery and overflowing station, and the only event calculated to disturb

the "even tenor of our life;" but some of our ordinary incidents are perhaps worthy of passing notice, as being somewhat out of the usual course of a young civilian's life.

Before leaving the ill-fated alligator, however, I am tempted to give an idea of his gastric capacity, by quoting the following account, published a short time ago, in *Allen's Indian Mail*: —

"A correspondent, writing from Chandbally to a Bengal paper, gives the following particulars of a man-eating alligator:—'The rivers of Orissa are infected with alligators, and every now and then one of these creatures acquires a reputation as a man-eater, and is then hunted down. Some time since, information was brought to Mr. Chapman, inspector of police at Chandbally, that a man had been carried off. It appears the poor fellow was lying in his boat with his feet hanging over the side, when the alligator made a snap at his feet, pulled him into the water, and made off. On receiving this report, Mr. Chapman manned his boat, and set off to the Danirah river, some miles from Chandbally, in pursuit. After several hours search, the mugger was seen crossing the river, and was allowed to gain the opposite bank. After crawling up the bank, it proceeded to make a meal of its victim, and whilst so engaged was, by a lucky shot, killed on the spot. The inspector had it cut open, and there was found in its stomach twenty-six pairs of brass anklets and bangles, weighing no less than fourteen seers. There was also two sets of gold ear-rings and a number of toe-rings. It is supposed this alligator must have devoured four women, five children, and an unknown number of persons who wore no jewellery.'" Pleasant hypothesis!

Our second son and daughter made their appearance while we were in our larger house.

Both our sons are at this moment in India, one a judge and the other a collector, both fathers of large families, and both a pride and blessing to their parents. All these children were baptised in 1834 by the Rev. W. Sturrock, no opportunity having before occurred. The eldest was christened after a valued friend, Fulwar Skipwith, himself a well-known civilian, the author of several useful works; the other after two young civilians, Carol:s Graham and William Vansittart who had been appointed assistants at Cuttack.

With C. Graham we subsequently formed a most intimate friendship; he was for some months afterwards my constant companion in my shooting and other excursions, and took a great interest in his godson. Neither he nor Vansittart are living, but Graham's health was delicate, and he was compelled to leave India long before the full term of his service was completed; his premature death two years ago was a cause of deep regret.

Of William Vansittart we saw but little after his sojourn at Cuttack. He, also, left the service very shortly, and returned to England, where he died.

About this period, George Stockwell had left the Commissionership, greatly regretted by many, and especially by ourselves; his place was supplied, however, by another officer, equally kind, and in temperament somewhat more genial.

John Master, or "Johnny Master," as from his kindly and jovial character he was generally called, was a dear and valued friend, overflowing with kindness, and an

especial admirer of our little Skipwith, whom he petted incessantly.

On the much-worn subject of "Sport" I have little to say, but must not altogether pass it over.

Cuttack, like most Indian stations, abounds in peacocks, jungle-fowl, black partridges, and "par excellence," quail. There were few tigers, and those in the distant jungle; and though there were also wild bull, they were seldom "get-at-able."

The most enjoyable shooting, however, was of the quail, which were in great abundance; and as "Toby," as I have before stated, could act the *rôle* of a pointer to perfection, I required no further adjuncts.

Many of my excursions were made with Carolus Graham, whom I have already mentioned. The tales of ordinary shooting are usually flat and unprofitable, but an incident occurred on one of our excursions which is worthy of mention; it might indeed have had a tragic issue.

Carolus Graham and myself were one day out quail and partridge shooting, and we had with us a tribe of little boys to beat the bushes. We had just emerged from the jungle upon a piece of plain ground, diversified by a few bushes, when, in taking a few steps further, a bevy of quail rose just out of killing distance, and settled down again a short way off. Wishing to get at them, but not wanting the *posse comitatus* of juveniles in the open, I told them all to stay where they were, and then went off alone to the spot to which I had marked the birds down.

On I walked, without looking behind me. When I reached the spot, the birds rose, but instead of going on

in front, or even to either side, flew directly back. I turned round at once and fired—killed a bird, but before I could fire a second barrel was, to my horror, greeted with a succession of cries and howls which horrified and bewildered me. Then, from a group of the low bushes which I had passed, first one boy, then another, then a third, all screaming, and pointing one to his throat,

another to his leg, another to his chest; the foolish fellows had followed me, unbeknown, to the shrubs close behind the spot I was making for, and, just before the birds rose, had squatted down in the bushes, and so received my shot, which was levelled low at the quail, in happy ignorance of the hiding group.

At first I was shocked, imagining that I might have

killed or seriously injured some of the crew; but, on coming close, I found that though seven or eight at the least had shots under the skin, none were dangerously injured.

The shot was small, and the distance sufficient to prevent more than a mere entrance under the skin. These were, consequently, abstracted with a penknife, amidst all manner of grimaces and shouting, and a few rupees distributed among the sufferers more than compensated for the disaster.

The last scene partook largely of the ridiculous, but I did not easily forget the first act of the drama—when the little brown figures rose one after the other out of the bush, screaming and gesticulating like the demons of a fairy tale.

Toby that day was not with me, and his sensitive heart was spared the surprise. The only other sporting incident worthy of notice occurred one day when we were beating the jungles for small game, and without expectation of anything sensational. My companions had entered the wood at one end with a horde of beaters, and were gradually approaching me, standing, as I was, in a narrow footpath between two tracks. Nearer and nearer they came, shrieking and howling and ejaculating as Indian beaters always do. Several shots had been fired, and sundry bipeds had taken flight, when suddenly the shots ceased, and all was still. The silence was mysterious, but was in a few minutes explained by one of the party appearing at one side of the jungle, who silently made warning signals to me, indicating the presence of danger.

Seeing this, I thought it wise to leave my little two-

foot path, which was in the centre of the wood, and the spot toward which the beaters were approaching. I accordingly went out sideways, and stood at the edge of the jungle. It was providential that I did so, for two minutes after my retreat, as I stood at the edge looking down the path, I suddenly saw a magnificent leopard emerging slowly from the bushes in the very spot where I had been standing. As he stepped cautiously forward he turned round with a proud and condescending stare at me, and then stepped slowly into the opposite wood.

Had my gun been loaded with ball I might have made sure of his carcase, but being only prepared with small shots for smaller game, it would have been madness to attempt it.

Shortly afterwards, when the beaters came up, they said they had come upon the creature, who was enjoying his breakfast of beefsteak, from the body of a bullock which he had evidently just killed, a fact which accounted for his slowness of steps and insouciance of manner as he crossed my path.

A native zemindar, who was with our party, immediately collected some men, ostentatiously girded up his loins, and set off in pursuit of the animal—with what result we never knew. My own feeling was that of gratitude for a very narrow escape, for, as I was, I should have necessarily been victimised, and afforded some variety to the monster's breakfast.

I have reserved to the close of my Cuttack chapter the reminiscences, some pleasant some painful, of the many friends with whom we formed acquaintance, more or less intimate, during our first year's sojourn.

Fifty years afford a long period for retrospect, and

as I never kept a regular journal I find it somewhat difficult to recall all the various incidents of our companionship, and quite impossible to place those which I do remember in their historical order. I propose, therefore, to jot down such as present themselves, and especially in connection with the actors who are still living, and whom it is a gratification to remember.

One of the officers whom we found at Cuttack on our first arrival in 1831 was Lieutenant Campbell, at that time a griffin, as youngsters are called in India. He was then in charge of a detachment of Artillery, with two 6-pounder guns. He distinguished himself, after a long and honourable career, at the siege of Delhi, in 1857, where he was severely wounded. He is now our near neighbour at Boulogne.

The regiment stationed at Cuttack when we first arrived was the 66th. It was succeeded by the 47th Native Infantry, which remained for some time. In 1833 the 33rd Regiment Native Infantry was sent from Barrackpore to Cuttack, extra troops being required in consequence of some disturbances among the hill tribes. It did not at once displace the 47th Regiment, which remained there for some months.

Of the officers of the 47th I have but little recollection, but many of the 33rd are still living, not in the flesh only, but in our memories and affections.

Arthur Becher was at that time a mere lad, or, as generally called, especially by the ladies, a "pretty boy." He has since distinguished himself in a brilliant career of service in different parts of India, the details of which are recorded in the Peerage, and in 1873 received the well-earned distinction of K.C.B. It is with no

little satisfaction that after so many years I have lately met Sir Arthur Becher full of honours; not exactly a "pretty boy" as in 1834, but to all appearance and in all essentials a young man still, as buoyant and kind-hearted as in our early days, and it is with true pleasure that I quote the following words in a note only lately received in reply to my query as to some particulars of the days gone by, reminding me of a mutual friend, of whom I shall say something more; he writes of "dear old Martin," and others, "like myself in single blessedness, in those days when we one and all partook so pleasantly (1834–35) of your hospitality and most agreeable society. Happy days, the first and friendliest of our Indian life."

"Dear old Martin" also, whom he mentions, I have had the satisfaction of lately meeting. In 1848, many years after our life in Cuttack, I found him at Segowlee with the 4th Irregular Cavalry, when I was travelling as Postmaster-General, and was proxy godfather to his first-born son—incidents which I shall refer to in my second volume when describing the latter portion of my tour, when I visited Khatmandhoo. He himself is still alive and hearty, and my godson has married the charming daughter of an intimate friend.

Another officer of the 38th Regiment, Captain Blake, I have already mentioned as my companion in the buggy when the fanatic madman tried to cut me down.

One other deserves notice, as he was a great sportsman, who had met with two strange accidents in his life. One day when passing a bush he was seized by a tiger, and his arms being confined in the brute's grasp he could not shoot. By a merciful accident, however, if

such it may be called, the trigger of the gun was pulled by a twig of the tree, and the tiger was disabled. He was badly hurt, and the dilemma was enhanced by his wife writing off to the station for assistance in words which sadly puzzled the readers, saying "a tiger has run away with my husband."

His other accident was a funny one. He was out shooting with a companion, who was at a short distance behind him, when the latter in a strange humour said to Captain Festing "May I have a shot?" "Yes," said he, and presented himself in an appropriate attitude. His comrade shot, the charge entered the Captain's leg, and he was lame ever after.

One more of the officers I must mention—Bankes, then a lieutenant, afterwards well known by distinguished service; in 1848 he lived for some months in our house in Chowringhee Road, with Charles Hobhouse and myself, during my wife's absence in England, and eventually lost his life during the Mutiny at Lucknow, where he held a high and important post.

I must not close this brief memorandum of friends and acquaintances without reference to the medical department. The one, Dr. Stiven, the station-doctor, had been there for many years. A benevolent and kind man, generally respected, but holding somewhat peculiar doctrines regarding diet. Acids of all kinds he held in undeviating abhorrence, and a report was prevalent that on one occasion, in neglect of his principles, he and his worthy wife had eaten one gooseberry out of a tart between them, and both suffered.

Another medical officer, Dr. F——, presented himself once to a body of spectators in a somewhat amusing pose.

For some purpose, not disclosed to vulgar eyes, he wished to allow his hair to grow sufficiently long to make a chain of; but not liking to display a long tail before the public, when the hinder lock arrived at a certain length he used to conceal it by carefully tucking it under the collar of his coat.

One day during a cricket match this gentleman, who was a capital player, struck the ball with such an extra amount of energy that the long-concealed lock sprung out of its hiding-place with the impetus of the blow, and the excited doctor, innocent of the fact, started off for the run, which was no ordinary one after such a swipe, and as he rushed backwards and forwards the newly disclosed lock of hair, as excited as himself, flew up and down behind his neck, to the intense amusement of the spectators who, to his astonishment, greeted the spectacle with shouts of laughter.

Of many others we both have recollections more or less vivid—Captain Mathews, the intimate friend of Martin, so intimate that we used to call them Mr. and Mrs. M., the elder gentleman representing the husband; David Pott, now a general, a most consummate veterinary doctor who was always consulted when any horses were in trouble; Captain and Mrs. Hewitt, with whom we contracted intimate friendship; Charles Trower; Champneys; Macadam, and some others.

CHAPTER XII.

FIRST APPOINTMENT TO BURDWAN.

Leave Cuttack.—My Dâk.—Meet Friends at Midnapore *en route*.—Arrival in Calcutta.—New Acquaintances.—Ross Mangles.—Charles Tucker.—J. Lowis and others.—Official Recognition of my Settlement Duties.—Arrival at Burdwan.—Description of Place.—The Young Rajah.—Dr. Cheek and Family.—R. Macan.—F. Skipwith arrives as Joint Magistrate.—Bobbery pack.—Curious Journey of Leading Hound from Calcutta.—Judge Curtis.—The Thug.—Strange Discovery.—Death of our little Girl.—Birth of another.—Death of John Palmer.—Notices in the Newspapers.—Visit of Bishop Wilson to the Station.—Leave Burdwan for Calcutta.—Our two eldest Children are sent to England.—We take a House at Hoogly.—Our sixth Child.—Go to Beerbhoom.—Sojourn with the D'Oylys.—Curious Trees.—Extract from Lecture on "Thaumato-dendra."—Return to Hoogly.

It was some months after the events related in the last chapter that I received a letter from Calcutta, informing me that I had been appointed to officiate as Magistrate and Collector of Burdwan; a flattering summons, as

the appointment and salary were both far higher than any of my contemporaries had obtained.

About two years previous I had received my first promotion in my appointment as head assistant on Rs. 700 per month, a gratifying fact which was communicated to me by Lady William Bentinck herself, in a kind letter, which evidently showed that she had interested herself in the matter.

The present increase of ways and means was not to be despised. We had then four children, and were beginning to speculate on the prospective expenses of a family. I had not, I regret to say, been very economical, and what with my horses, bobbery pack, flower-garden, and building expenses, added to my trips and sojourn in Calcutta four years before, the vulgar question of money was beginning to obtrude itself.

I gladly accepted the appointment, therefore, and we had once more to encounter the fatigue and trouble of a dâk journey to Calcutta.

Our way was through Balasore, the station which I first saw when visiting F. Skipwith during his illness.

The word Balasore is corrupted from Baleswara, the "young lord," or, "Krishna," the Adonis of the province of Orissa. In 1828 it was made into an independent collectorate under Mr. (now Sir Henry) Ricketts.

It is an unpicturesque and uninteresting country, described by Dr. Hunter as a "strip" of alluvial land between the hills and the sea, and as we only stopped there for a few hours I will not trouble the reader with any attempt at description.

The unhappy district, however, once obtained a painful notoriety, viz. in the famine of 1866, and without attempt-

ing to enter into the details of that mismanaged visitation, the following brief extract will give some idea of the awful condition to which the people were reduced.

"In March and April the general population had fallen into a state of dejection, and had lost all energy. They were swarming into the villages and there dying of cholera, dysentery, or hunger. Even in Balasore town the organised relief was utterly insufficient to meet the need of food.

"A distribution which the Commissioner witnessed in April was a scene of utter confusion; the starving crowds were beyond management. They seized the food as soon as they saw it, and even fell on the Commissioner, snatching from his hands and pockets the *pice* which he intended to distribute. So uncontrollable were the attacks of the paupers on the pots of cooked food that for a time the Committee was obliged to give out uncooked rice; but in Balasore, as in other districts, it was soon found that the rice so given was devoured raw, and therefore the Committee reverted to cooked food."

From Balasore we proceeded to Midnapore, the adjoining district, where we stayed for some days with our friend David Money of the Civil Service.

Mr. (now Sir Henry) Ricketts had shortly before succeeded to the commissionership of the province, and in calling upon him I found him in the act of perusing my settlement reports, and laughing heartily over a portion in which, referring to some fishermen with whom a separate arrangement had been made, I denominated them the piscatorial community. Mr. and Mrs. John Doyly, with whom I had made acquaintance in Calcutta

on my first arrival at the home of John Elliot, whose particular friends they were, were here living, Mr. Doyly being the judge of the station. O. W. Malet also, with whom we subsequently formed an intimate friendship, was living as an assistant in single blessedness, and Captain (now Sir Arthur) Phayre, a highly distinguished officer whom I subsequently met at Akyab, where I went with Sir Herbert Maddock some years afterwards.

After a few days' agreeable rest we wended our way, and once more reached the City of Palaces.

In the few days during which we remained in Calcutta, on the way to our new station, I made acquaintance with several distinguished men, whose friendship was an unspeakable comfort to me for years afterwards.

Amongst others were Ross Mangles, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, well known in after days as Member of the Court of Directors, and subsequently as Member of Parliament; John Lowis and Charles Tucker, members of the Sudder Board; my old acquaintance, Sir E. Ryan, whom I had irreverently introduced into my sketch-book on my first arrival; and many others.

I then also saw for the first time the official reports of my sayings and doings at Cuttack when as yet an assistant; reports which had been submitted, under general orders lately passed, to the Supreme Government, and which were shown to me by Mr. Mangles.

As I am writing of myself—both good and evil—my egotism will be forgiven if I here insert extracts from reports which will show, that however inexcusable my idleness and laxity in the first days of my career, and

however great my subsequent sins and misdemeanors, I had, at this time, after a short season of inactivity, become a "good boy" and given satisfaction to my successive masters.

Extract from Mr. Collector Maxwell's first half-yearly report on the official character and qualifications of his subordinates, dated 14th July 1834, No. 132:—

"*W. W. Tayler, 2nd Assistant.*

"Since Mr. Tayler's transfer to this office by the late Commissioner, he has been twice called on to officiate as a Deputy Collector and Joint Magistrate; on the latter occasion, during the absence on leave of Mr. Pringle, from the middle of March last to the 2nd ultimo, when a fair opportunity was left open to me of discerning the extent of his acquirements, and of appreciating the value of his assistance in the higher grade of the office.

"To a naturally acute intellect, Mr. Tayler unites a shrewdness combined with a depth of mental acquirements far surpassing mediocrity, and indicative of the most promising hopes of his future celebrity as a public officer of Government.

"In a late report I have announced my intention of employing the services of Mr. Tayler in the revision of settlements during the ensuing season, and have recommended him as fully competent to exercise the special powers provided by regulation, both in the department of Revenue and Police.

(Signed) "W. R. MAXWELL,
"Collector,
"Zillah Cuttack Collrs. Office,
"The 11th August 1848.
"(True Copy)."

Extract from Mr. Acting-Collector Mills' first half-yearly report, on the official character and qualification of the subordinates, dated 3rd July 1835, No. 209:—

"*Mr. Tayler, Head Assistant.*

"I have read over with much pleasure his report and proceedings on one of the settlements he has concluded, which is highly creditable to him, and satisfies me that he is eminently qualified to conduct those important duties. Mr. Tayler's proficiency in Persian and Hindoostanee is very good, and I understand his attainments in Orriah are respectable. He possesses talents and abilities of no common order, and I consider him fully qualified in case of a vacancy to succeed to the appointment of Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector.

(Signed) "A. T. MILLS,
"Acting Collector,
"(True extract).
"T. M. MACTIER,
"Dy. Collector in charge."

It was no slight compliment to be sent after so few years' service and appointed to an acting-collectorship and magistracy, and I hope I was sensible of the honour. When I reached Calcutta Mr. Mangles, the Secretary to Government, made no mystery of my promotion, but told me unreservedly that my settlement operations in Cuttack had given great satisfaction and hence my reward.

Burdwan is not a picturesque or interesting station; flat, unwooded, and somewhat swampy; there is nothing to gratify the imagination, or supply materials for the pencil. The one exceptional object of interest is the Raj-baree, *i.e.* the house and premises belonging to the Rajah.

The late Rajah Mahtub Chund was then a young lad of some fourteen years old, pleasing, lively, and intelligent; he was under the tutelage of Mr. Greenwood, an amiable and excellent clergyman, but the influence of the Zenana and the attractions of amusement constantly

offered, where study should have been the first object, interfered sadly with the youth's educational progress. The young gentleman was fond of riding, and frequently joined us in our hunting excursions, though the watchfulness of his guardians seldom permitted him a forward place in the chase. He lived for many years after this, respected and honoured.

I have been very much pleased at reading the following brief account of the young Rajah, written by Dr. W. Hunter, in his valuable statistical work:—

"In 1832, Maharaja Tej Chandra died, leaving to his adopted son, Mahtáb Chandra, the present Maharaja, his enormous landed and funded estates. On the latter succeeding to the ráj, in 1833, the English Government honoured him with a *khillat*, in due form. He has proved a most enlightened representative of the landed aristocracy of the province. One of his first acts was the establishment of an Anglo-Vernacular school in Bardwán, where five hundred boys gather daily to receive the benefits of free education in English and Bengalee, Sanskrit and Persian. It is a first-class institution, and efficiently conducted by a teaching staff of educated Hindus. The Maharaja has also established hospitals and dispensaries for the sick poor of Burdwan and Kalna. These institutions, as well as the other charities established and maintained by him, attest his benevolence, and afford an example of enlightened liberality. I have already mentioned the munificence of the measures undertaken by the Maharaja for the support of his tenantry during the famine of 1866.

"During the Santal Rebellion in 1856, the Maharaja aided the military authorities by forwarding and supply-

ing stores and means of transport. He also kept up a line of communication by troopers.

"During the more important and terrible outbreak of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857, the Maharaja did everything in his power to strengthen the hands of Government, and to give every aid that was considered necessary. He placed elephants and bullock-carts at the disposal of the authorities, kept open the roads between Burdwan and Beerbhoom and between Burdwan and Katwa, so that there was no interruption of intelligence between the seat of government and the anxiously-watched stations of Beerbhoom and Barhampore. In 1864 the Maharaja was appointed an additional member of the Viceregal Legislative Council, being the first native gentleman who was so honoured. He continued in that post for three years."

Since I commenced these memoirs, Maharaja Mahtub Chund has died; but I had the pleasure of a personal meeting with him in Calcutta, and congratulating him on his honourable career on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales to India; he expressed extreme pleasure at seeing me again, and we enjoyed a chat on past times; he was especially delighted when I reminded him of his youthful days, when he rode with my bobbery pack at Burdwan.

He had died full of honour, and has been succeeded by his heir.

I must here, in passing, mention that the Rajahs of Burdwan had for many years observed a somewhat remarkable custom. Being of the Khetri caste, they preserved the ashes of the dead, and there is a building at Kulna, a large town of the district, called the "Sumaj

Bari," a house or sepulchre, in which a bone of all the deceased members of the family is kept. The bone of the Maharaja himself, as Dr. Hunter writes in his book on Cuttack, "is wrapped up in a silk cloth, and is regarded as if the Maharaja was living himself, and is placed on a velvet state cushion, with silver salvers, tumblers, hookahs, rose water, and utur-holders, just as the late Maharaja used to sit, with all the paraphernalia of state about him!" Such is the power of superstition.

The important events connected with Burdwan since the time I first went there are the organization of the great Raneegunge coal-mines, and the introduction of railways.

The fact that coal existed in the district was known in 1744, and in 1830 several collieries were working; in 1831 the subject was mentioned by the Rev. R. Everest, and in 1838, the period of our residence, the first report of a Committee of Investigation was published. In 1845, however, Mr. D. Williams was sent by the East India Company, and under his direction the coal-fields were carefully examined and reported on.

At the commencement of the railway transit, a most amusing little scene presented itself. It was the first day on which the train was to leave Burdwan, on, I imagine, an experimental trip. Cecil Beadon, James Young, Gordon Young, and myself, were at the station, where a great crowd was assembled to witness the interesting event.

The train was there empty, and a crowd of witnesses, principally of the respectable class—young men from the schools, colleges, and a vast miscellaneous concourse—were waiting for the signal to enter. The signal was given, and the doors opened: in the youths rushed, helter-

skelter, till the principal carriage, a sort of saloon, was cram full, all the youths standing up huddled together. But the cry was "Still they come!" and it was only by the assistance of the guard, who seemed to enjoy the task, that at last individuals were only enabled to enter by being pushed in from outside, and sustained by the door which he shut behind them, and thus pressed them in. While this strange process went on, suddenly a feeble, melancholy voice was heard from the centre of the crowded mass; it cried out, in plaintive tone, "Let us out! let us out! We suffer inconvenience. Biting dogs are here!" And true enough, a bull-dog had got into the carriage, and, as the pressure increased, was taking liberties with the uncovered calves of the native crowd.

The scene was supremely ludicrous; the stifling crowd squeezed together as with a vice, the weak melancholy tone and mild expression of the victims, the complacent grin of the guard, and the evident enjoyment of the spectators, formed such an absurd scene, that shouts of laughter, instead of sympathy, greeted the sufferers.

Though there were not any sensational attractions, our life at Burdwan was for the first two years a peaceful and happy one. The "oldest inhabitant," though not old in years, was Dr. Cheek, who with his wife, grown-up daughter, and two children, occupied a large house in the station, and an intimacy was soon established between us. The judge, Mr. Curtis, his son and daughter, were kind and hospitable. Mr. R. Macan, the additional judge, a most excellent and superior man deeply imbued with religious principles. Mr. Fulwar Skipwith, who was a valued friend whom we had known in former days in Cuttack, came with his wife shortly

after our arrival, as joint magistrate; and there were several other assistants. There were also the Rev. Mr. Greenwood, whom I have already mentioned, a missionary, with his wife and three daughters, one of whom became one of our dearest friends. Frequent changes during the three years of our residence took place in the society, but the family of Dr. Cheek remained to the last. While we were there several friends came to see us; my first cousin, Captain, afterwards General Hall, the son of Dr. Hall the Dean of Durham, stayed with us for some time. David Money, afterwards judge of the Calcutta High Court, our old friend, paid us visits, and many others at intervals.

Our tendencies during this period inclined towards what graver people might call triviality, or at all events amusement, and, *imprimis*, in recollection of my Cuttack days I got up a bobbery pack, formed of every canine variety—terriers, bull-dogs, spaniels, setters, and any others we could obtain, not forgetting the "pariah" or dog of the country, a lean long-legged animal with no nose, for scent at least, but with great speed; at the head of these were two or three half-breeds, and as a leader a large well-bred hound, who always regarded the rest with disdain, as if ashamed of his comrades.

The way in which we got this dog from Calcutta was peculiar. Young Curtis, the son of the judge, a very little man, but a very great sportsman, bought him for us in Calcutta, and brought him up all the way in a covered dhooly, passing him off in his hidden abode as a native lady, *purdah-nusheen*,* not to be looked at.

* Sitting behind the curtain.

The poor fellow was himself not long after thrown from his horse on the Calcutta racecourse, and killed on the spot.

His father, the judge, was a kind but rather eccentric man, strangely impulsive, and lame of one leg; the story of his lameness, which he used to tell himself with great gusto, was extremely curious. By his own account he had frequently in the good old days, when champagne was drunk in wall-shades instead of ordinary glasses, indulged at dinner sufficiently to make him somewhat unsteady on his pins, but he never had an accident. One day, however, after dining at the Town Hall in Calcutta, where he had been unusually abstemious, he was walking home, slowly and soberly, when he stumbled over a small heap of rubbish and broke his leg, which the doctor could never set for want of lubricating matter to render adhesion possible. The good old gentleman was highly eccentric. One night at Burdwan he fell out of bed, and being terribly bitten by mosquitoes, revenged himself by sending for his bearer on the spot and giving him a sound thrashing.

On principle we hunted the jackal with our promiscuous pack, but when there had been a blank day the miscellaneous canine assemblage more than once varied the monotony of our march home by sudden and furious onslaughts on a stray pig, of which there were always many stragglers in the dry bed of the river. Once, indeed, they went off in full cry after a bewildered donkey, which, spite of his continuous braying, they ran down and would have devoured if they had not been whipped off. These were only occasional escapades, however, and, taken all in all, the pack was wonderfully

efficient considering the heterogeneous items of which it was composed, and our "kills" were almost as regular as the great Calcutta pack of veritable hounds.

The functions of a magistrate and collector are rather monotonous, and I cannot call to mind many incidents in connexion with my official duties to interest the reader; the following, however, is an exception:—

One day I received from the superintendent of the "Thuggee" department a list of well-known Thugs supposed to reside in my district, with a request for assistance in their capture.

The readers of these memoirs probably know the "Thugs" by name, though as I have heard ladies pronounce the word "Thoogs," giving full force to the *h*, it may not always be recognised. But, however the name may be pronounced, there is no mistake regarding their character and pursuits.

They are the interesting beings whose sole purpose in life is the strangulation of their fellow-creatures, whom they captivate and seduce by their friendly overtures, and whom, when reposing in unsuspecting confidence, they suddenly strangle with a handkerchief in the name of their patron deity, Kalee.

Colonel Sleeman and others have given so full an account of these garroting assassins, that their deeds and doings are now tolerably well known, and it is a large item to be placed to the credit of the British Government as a set-off against their many delinquencies, that they have by patient and persevering efforts almost extinguished the diabolical system, of which I shall have more to say hereafter.

But to my tale. Five out of the six men mentioned

in the list I ferreted out and sent to the authorities; but the sixth was nowhere! No trace whatever could be found of him; but the inquirers persisted that he was somewhere in the district, and after continued search and careful inquiry a clue was at last obtained.

Dr. Cheek, whom I have already mentioned, had a child's bearer, *i.e.* a he nurse, who had charge of his children. The man was a special favourite, remarkable for his kind and tender ways with his little charges; gentle in manner, and unexceptionable in all his conduct. Every year he obtained leave from his master and mistress, as he said, for the filial purpose of visiting his aged mother, for one month; and returning after the expiry of that time, with the utmost punctuality, resumed with the accustomed affection and tenderness the charge of his little darlings. *This mild and exemplary being was the missing "Thug"!* Kind, gentle, conscientious, and regular at his post, for eleven months in the year, he devoted the twelfth to strangulation. Such, under the dominion of Satan, is human nature.

To the utter astonishment of Dr. and Mrs. Cheek, and the whole family, the fact was proved, the missing Thug was arrested, his identity established, and he was sent off to endure in his own person, though with something more of state and ceremony, the unpleasant operation which he had so frequently performed on his brethren. Another specimen of man—half deity, half devil!

When the wretch's identity was established, Dr. Cheek was heard to exclaim, "What a mercy he did not strangle me; he has dried my hair every day for years."

This hunt after the Thugs raised no little excitement. My "nazir" or head executive officer, a stalwart

Mahomedan named Golam Ali, became perfectly excited, and once caused great laughter by his enthusiasm. A banghey, or tin travelling-box, was one day brought into the magistrate's office, having been found on the roadside. Golam Ali confidently declared, before everybody, that it belonged to the Thugs, one of whom had dropped it

while hotly pursued by his peons, and that it would be found to contain some of their things. The box was opened, and a weapon appeared at the top; this was instantly seized by Golam Ali, who, lifting it aloft, exclaimed, "See, did I not speak truly? here is the instrument with which these villains cut off their victims' heads!" As he said this he lifted up the weapon in

triumph, and displayed to the spectators around a machine for docking horses' tails!

About the same time the Mohafiz, or record-keeper of the Collector's office, was discovered to be himself a Thug; and it was found that he had been in the habit of soliciting and obtaining what are called "rah-daree purwanehs," or pass orders, from the authorities for the use of his comrades when out on their strangulation encounters.

Before my work is concluded I shall have more to say regarding this diabolical fraternity. But to give some idea of the strange eccentricities of their system, I quote the following extract from the work of Mr. Hutton:—

"If the partridge call at night, or the jackal during the day, quit that country or you will be seized.

"Immediate and valuable booty might be expected if the large hill-crow were heard croaking on a tree with a river or tank in sight; but the reverse was the case if the bird were seated on a buffalo or pig, or on the skeleton of any dead animal.

"Pleasant, too, was the prospect if a cat came prowling to their encampment by night, and equally cheering to see a wolf or a shrike crossing the road from the right to the left, or a large male antelope, or a kind of small deer, or the blue jay crossing from left to right.

"It was good to hear the hare calling at night upon the left; or the loud continued hooting of the small owl, when sitting on the cell of the partridge, on the left while travelling, on the right while halting.

"If a herd of deer came in sight they looked ere long to fall in with another gang of Thugs."

Such were the fancies of this murderous gang.

Meanwhile several events happened—some painful, some pleasurable—in our domestic circle. A little girl was added to our increasing flock; and, alas! one, by God's will, was taken from us.

My wife's father, the great John Palmer, who had been for years past steadily working to retrieve the disasters to which his firm had been exposed, with the special object of relieving those who had suffered from the event, expired in Calcutta on the 22nd January 1836, respected by all and deeply loved by all the surviving members of his family.

To give some idea of the estimation in which John Palmer was universally held, I will here subjoin a few extracts from the principal journals published at the time, as well as the inscription afterwards placed on the pedestal of his bust, which was executed by Sir Francis Chantry, and placed by subscription in the Town Hall in Calcutta.

And while transcribing these notices, I would mention that the well-known and, as I may truly say, the celebrated John Palmer, whom his friend the Marquis of Hastings always called the "prince of merchants," was the second son of General William Palmer. He was brought up for the Navy, which he entered at a very early age, and in which he served for several years, in one of the ships which was brought into conflict with the celebrated French admiral, Suffren. All prospect of advancement, however, having been destroyed by the general Peace of Paris, he left the Navy in 1783, and in 1791 married a daughter of General Hampton, an officer of the Bengal Army, who in 1765 had himself married a Miss Hicks.

General Palmer, who was in the King's Army, changed to that of Bengal in 1770, and, after a short time, became Military and Private Secretary—in fact, Confidential Minister—to Warren Hastings. He subsequently held the highest diplomatic offices in India, and was successively Resident at the Courts of Poona, Hyderabad, and Delhi, and finished his career as a General in the Bengal Staff at Berhampore. He had three legitimate sons, of whom, as I have stated above, John Palmer was the second. All of them returned to England for their education, with their mother, who died there. The other two sons never married; they were both in the Bengal Army, and died in the service.

The following are some of the extracts referred to :—

"*Mr. John Palmer.*" (*Hurkaru.*)

"It is our mournful duty to announce the death of John Palmer, Esq., which occurred yesterday morning at 2 o'clock.

"Few men have lived more generally esteemed, and few died more generally lamented, than this gentleman. Originally an officer in the navy, he came to Calcutta many years ago, and established the house which so long bore his name, and which his intelligence and activity elevated to a state of almost unparalleled prosperity, but which in 1830 sank to rise no more, under the calamities whigh have since wrecked all the great firms which so long flourished in this place. In the higher and palmy days of our commercial prosperity, the house of John Palmer & Co. stood pre-eminent, and the head of that house, from his individual liberality and the scale on which the transactions of the house were conducted, obtained the title of the Prince of Merchants. To the natives he had endeared himself by the kindness of his manner and the justness of his dealings, and time was when his name would have perhaps stood good for a crore of rupees in the money market. If he bore himself meekly in the days of his prosperity, he equally commanded respect by the manner in which he endured

his misfortunes when he sank from the conspicuous station of a leading man in the community, foremost in the support of his money and influence of every honourable and useful undertaking, to the obscurity of a ruined and humbled man. Mr. Palmer had, however, recommenced business with very considerable success, and its profits were devoted to the support of those who had been ruined by the failure of his Firm! As a member of society he was esteemed for his intelligence and beloved for his amiable qualities. He was a man of extensive information and of great benevolence. While his means admitted of the exercise of his liberality, he had 'a hand open as day to melting charity,' and many who are now among the most wealthy, owe their fortunes to his generosity."

Extract from The Englishman.

"In all the essential qualities that constitute a good citizen, and an useful and estimable man, he was eminently conspicuous. As a fellow-man none could apply to him without meeting with sympathy, and a desire to serve as a fellow-citizen, in whatever of public import deserved and required assistance and support, whether with purse or with personal exertions, he was ever the foremost. Hence we find his name at the head of every public-spirited scheme that for many years had been promulgated. Hence we find him to have been in fact and reality the father of the Free Press of India. From Mr. Buckingham's report of the proceedings of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, on the *Calcutta Journal*, we learn that it was Mr. John Palmer that first conceived the idea of establishing a journal independent of the control of Government.

* * * * * * *

"It were impossible for us to enumerate the vast variety of useful works, both of a private and public nature, which are recorded in the hearts of thousands, of John Palmer.

* * * * * * *

"In a word, for we are compelled to brevity, of the late John Palmer it will be said that he was a man whose heart prosperity could never harden, nor adversity subdue, which melted like wax before the fire at the misfortunes of others, but was as adamant in endurance of his own.

"The intrinsic honesty of his nature was nobly exhibited in the scrupulous integrity with which he devoted the evenings of his hour of misfortune, to the discharge of his creditors' claims. Peace to his manes, with all our hearts say we; and sure are we that there is not one in India who will not, laying all bitter thoughts aside upon such an occasion, unite with us in crying 'Peace to the ashes of John Palmer!'"

"*The Late John Palmer, Esq.*

"We this week visited the studio of that unrivalled sculptor Sir Francis Chantry, for the purpose of viewing, previous to its shipment to Calcutta, the bust of one whose name is known and revered throughout British India. The following is the inscription which appears on the pedestal, and all who know the man will acquiesce in the truth.

"JOHN PALMER, Esq.
OF CALCUTTA, MERCHANT,
SECOND SON OF THE LATE
LIEUTENANT-GENERAL WILLIAM PALMER.
BORN 8TH OCTOBER 1767.—DIED 22ND JANUARY 1836.
TO SUPERIOR TALENT HE UNITED A MIND
WELL CULTIVATED AND RICHLY STORED,
WITH A HEART SUSCEPTIBLE
OF EVERY GENEROUS AND BENEVOLENT TEMPER,
READY AT ALL TIMES TO SYMPATHISE
IN THE SORROWS AND SUFFERINGS
OF HIS FELLOW-CREATURES.
TO THE POOR AND AFFLICTED
HIS COUNSEL, WHEN REQUIRED, WAS PROMPT,
AND HIS HAND OPEN
IN THE HOUR OF THEIR NEED.
THE VICISSITUDES AND TRIALS OF LIFE,
WHICH IT WAS HIS LOT TO EXPERIENCE
IN THEIR SEVEREST FORMS,
HE BORE WITH EQUANIMITY AND FORTITUDE;
AND HE LIVED IN THE RESPECT AND AFFECTION
OF A NUMEROUS CIRCLE OF FRIENDS,
EUROPEAN AND NATIVE,
WHO RIGHTLY APPRECIATING HIS WORTH,
AND DEEPLY SORROWING FOR HIS LOSS,
HAVE CAUSED THIS MONUMENT
TO BE ERECTED TO HIS MEMORY.
REQUIESCAT IN PACE."

During our stay at Burdwan, the Venerable Bishop of Calcutta, Daniel Wilson, paid the station a visit, remaining for several days, and treating us to one of his striking sermons. We were all delighted, not only with his kind and genial, though somewhat eccentric, manners, but the greatest impression by his presence was made on our little son Skipwith, who was entranced by the unusual sight of the large and polished buckles on his lordship's shoes.

The service in the church was usually performed either by Mr. Weilbrecht or Mr. Lecky, the clergymen in charge of the large missionary establishment about a mile from the station.

Just at this time I was appointed Special Deputy Collector for investigating the titles to rent-free tenures, and as the duties of my new office extended over several districts, it became necessary to travel from one to another. After some months, therefore, when I had disposed of the majority of cases at Burdwan, we made preparations for our departure, gave up our house, and, after staying with our kind friends the Cheeks for some days, set off for Hoogli. During the interval we had the pleasure of seeing our cherished flower-garden and lovely lawn, in the cultivation of which I had taken great pride, and, at considerable expense, had enclosed with an iron rail, turned by my unsympathising successor into a grazing-ground for his sheep!

On leaving Burdwan we went at first to Calcutta, to the house of our excellent friend Richard Macan. My wife remained there for some time, our eldest son Skipwith having been taken ill, but joined me again after a few days, at Hoogli. On our arrival at the station, we

first occupied a bungalow lent us by a friend, and afterwards a house belonging to Dr. Wise, which we hired, and during our occupation of which, our friend E. Trevor, with his wife and sister-in-law, paid us a visit. Eventually we took a beautiful house at Bandel, on the bank of the river. Here we stayed for some months. Our friend Miss Cheek paid us a visit, and days passed pleasantly enough, until the melancholy time arrived when it became necessary to send our two eldest children to England.

To make the requisite arrangements for this sad event we again went to Calcutta, taking rooms at a private boarding-house, in Chowringhee Road, kept by a Miss Wright.

The dear children were placed under the charge of Captain Chapman, the commander of the ship *Broxenbury*, and were accompanied by our faithful African maid-servant Catherine. I accompanied them to the sandheads, and experienced for the first time the pain which Indian residence involves—the separation of parent and child.

To this day I can recal the sad expression of their dear little faces, when I bade them farewell and left the ship, although they are now themselves the parents of grown-up children.

One consolation, however, was reserved for us, which all parents do not enjoy.

Our children were sent to the charge of my dearest mother, then still living with my eldest sister, who had never left her during the many years of her life.

The protection of such guardians, I need hardly say, was an intense relief amidst the pain of separation.

When this painful parting was over, we returned to Hooghly, and I resumed my official duties. No particular

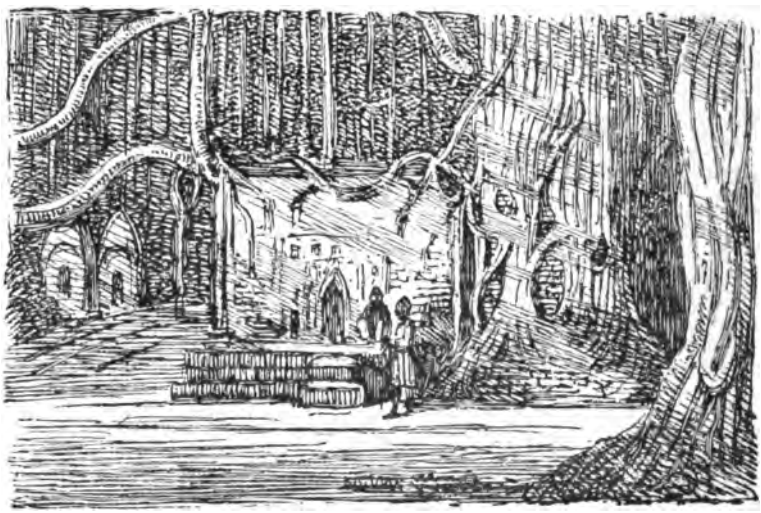
external event happened after this to disturb the "even tenor of our days"; but on the 11th of May 1838 our sixth child, a daughter, was born.

When I had got through the greater portion of my Hooghly cases, we made arrangements for visiting my third district—Beerbhoom. Passing our old station of Burdwan we remained for some days *en route*, when our baby was made the special pet of our old friend Mrs. Cheek, and in duetime reached Beerbhoom. Here we were kindly entertained by Mr., afterwards Sir John, D'Oyly, who was the judge of the district, and whom we had seen at Midnapore in 1836, on our way from Cuttack. His wife was a Miss Fendall, sister of our great friend Mrs. John Lowis. She was an enthusiastic artist, and as Beerbhoom is an extremely picturesque district, abounding in noble trees and attractive scenery, we found, during our brief stay, many choice objects for the pencil. Our pictorial party was, shortly after our arrival, increased by the presence of Welby Jackson, a civilian who was addicted to the art, and painted remarkably well.

The most valuable subject which presented itself was a marvellous banyan-tree, which, with its measureless branches and pendent stems, covered a large space of ground, containing upwards of four hundred temples. Which was the original stem was a matter of dispute, but it was generally believed to be one which bordered on a sacred pool of warm water, which pilgrims visited in numbers.

The annexed sketches show the curious way in which the hanging tendrils generally embrace and swallow up the object of their affection, retaining the form of the

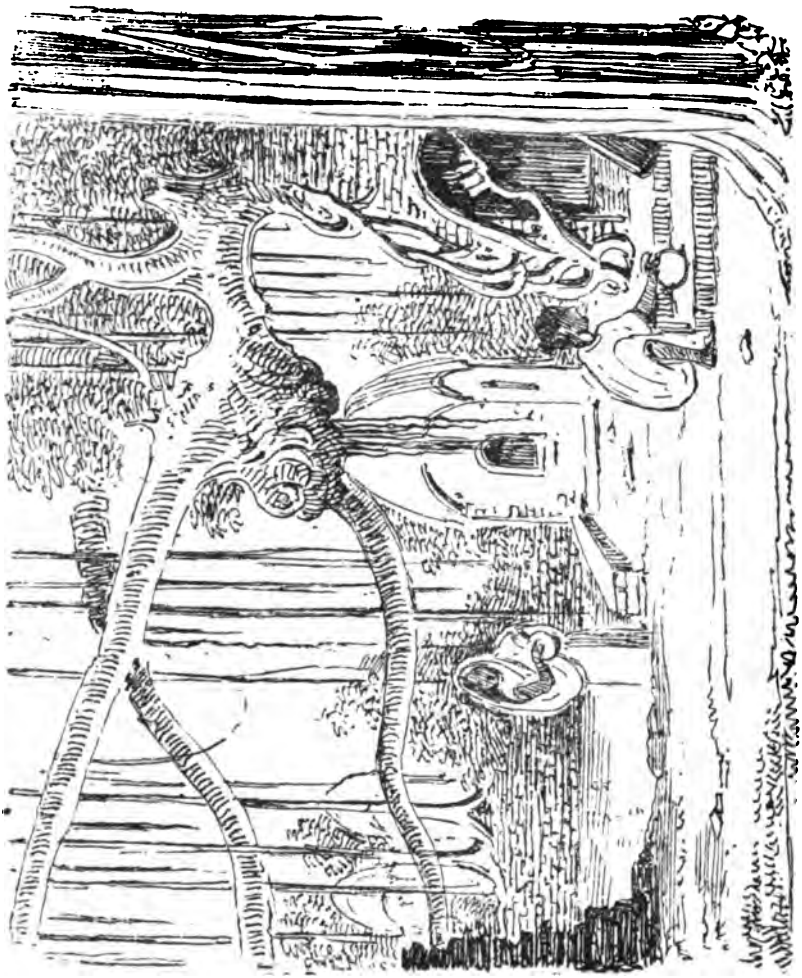
temples in some instances, and in others completely destroying them.



In a lecture on "Thaumato-dendra, or the Wonders of Trees," which I delivered at the Society of Arts in London, on May 11th, 1877, I gave a full description of these trees, and exhibited some large coloured sketches of them, which I had taken on the spot, and as I then, besides giving a general account of the banyan, referred specially to those which I had seen and sketched in Beerbhoom so many years ago, and as the subject is full of interest, I will here quote some of the paragraphs of my lecture which deal with the subject.

"*Banyan-Tree.*

"For sanctity, size, eccentricity of growth, and other peculiar features, the banyan and peepul are, *par excel-*



SACRED SPRING AND BANYAN-TREE.

lence, the trees of India. Both of them are striking in appearance, both are associated more or less with religion; each is intimately connected with the other, and, in fact, they represent bride and bridegroom, when first committed to the soil by the superstitious native. I will deal with banyan, or *ficus indica*, first.

"Speaking of this tree scientifically, I may observe that it belongs to the great family of the *urticaceæ*, and is, strange to say, own cousin to that very unpleasant vegetable, the 'stinging nettle.'

"The tree, stupendous as it appears, is in truth a 'fig-tree,' and the small red berry which it bears, and which on the emergency of a general famine affords food to many thousands, is a miniature but *bonâ fide* fig.

"It is difficult to describe, and almost impossible to exaggerate, the grandeur and magnificence of this extraordinary tree after some years of growth. It has, in fact, formed a theme of exquisite description by some of our ablest poets, and before I enter upon a prosaic account, I will give you the poetical portraiture drawn by one or two of these celebrated word-painters.

"Southey in his 'Curse of Kehama,' thus writes:—

'Twas a fair scene wherein they stood,
A green and sunny glade amid the wood,
And in the midst an aged banyan grew;
'Twas a goodly sight to see
That venerable tree,
Far o'er the lawn irregularly spread
Fifty straight columns propt its lofty head,
And many a long depending shoot,
Seeking to strike its root,
Straight like a plummet grew towards the ground.

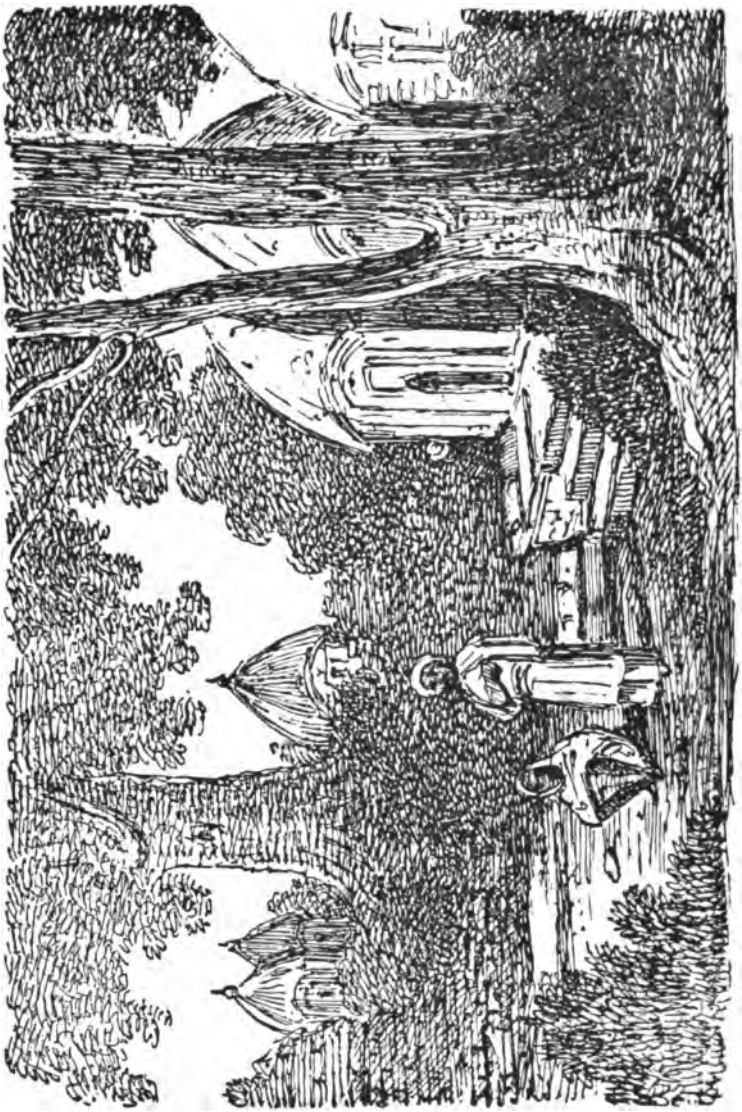
Some on the lower boughs, which crossed their way,
Fixing their bearded fibres round and round,
With many a ring and wild contortion wound,
Some to the passing wind, at times, with sway
Of gentle motion swung;
Others of younger growth, unmov'd, were hung
Like stone drops from the cavern's fretted height,
Beneath was smooth and fair to sight,
Nor weeds nor briars deform'd the natural floor,
And through the leafy cope which bowered it o'er,
Came gleams of chequered light.
So like a temple did it seem, that there
A pious heart's first impulse would be prayer.'

"Referring to the sentiments expressed in these lines, it is curious that Bishop Heber, describing one of these trees, remarks, 'The first impression on coming under its shade was, "What a noble place of worship," thus unconsciously re-echoing the sentiment which has led in ages past to the worship now known to have been almost universal.

"Milton also thought the noble tree worthy of his pen, and thus writes of it:—

'Branching so broad along, that in the ground
The bending twigs take root, and daughters grow,
About the mother tree, a pillared shade,
High over-arched, with echoing walks between.
There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
At loop-holes cut in thickest shades.'

"These lines are said to have been written especially in description of the 'Kuveer Bur,' the largest banyan in the world, which is thus mentioned by Bishop Heber in his interesting journal:—



TREES AND TEMPLES AT BEERBHOOM.

"'Another curiosity in this neighbourhood is the celebrated bur or banyan-tree called "Kuveer Bur," from a saint who is said to have planted it. It stands on and entirely covers an island of the Nerbudda, about twelve miles above Broach. Of this tree, which has been renowned ever since the first coming of the Portuguese to India, which is celebrated by our early voyagers and by Milton, and which, the natives tell us, boasted a shade sufficiently broad to shelter 10,000 horses, a considerable part has been washed away with the soil on which it stood, within these few years, by the freshes of the river, but enough remains, as I was assured, to make it one of the noblest groves in the world, and well worthy of all the admiration which it has received.'

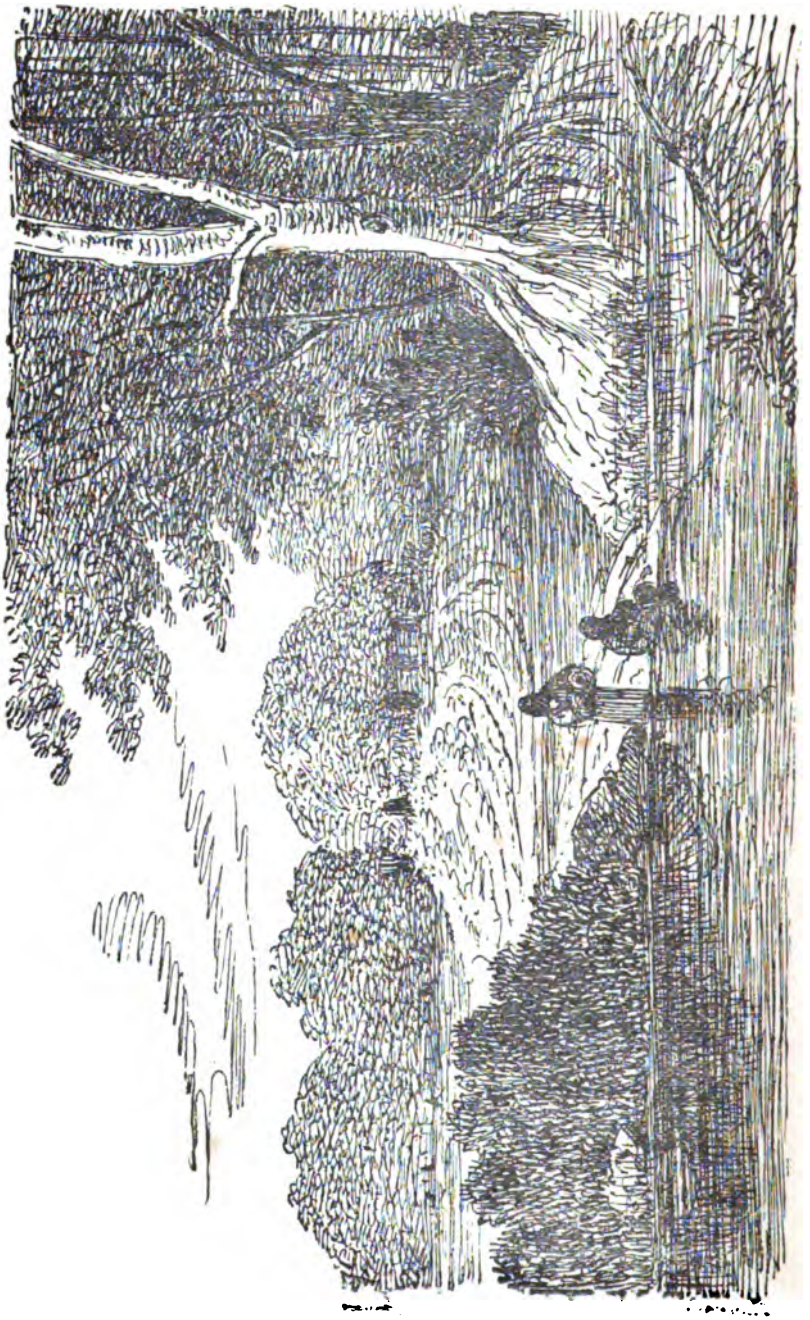
"There are endless phenomena connected with the life, vegetation, and growth of this tree. Two of these are especially referred to by Dr. Hooker in his interesting work on the Himalayas.

"In writing regarding a well-known banyan-tree, which he says was still the pride and ornament of the Botanical Garden in Calcutta, he mentions two essential peculiarities to which I shall shortly direct your attention.

"The first is, that the banyan, unlike all other trees, hardly ever vegetates on the ground, but generally from seeds deposited by birds in the crowns of palm-trees.

"The second is, that it throws down from the branches descending roots, or props, which, light and flexible at first, eventually become firm and thicken into stems.

"I will, in the first place, say a few words in regard to the second characteristic thus mentioned, and which, in fact, is the peculiarity which separates the 'banyan'



VIEW AT BEERBHOOM.

and one or two of its congeners, from all other trees in nature's garden.

"The phenomenon mentioned by Dr. Hooker, with respect to the vegetation of the tree on the crown of the palm, I pass over for the present, merely remarking that although this is beyond doubt, strange as it is, the usual mode of vegetation, yet the banyan is very frequently planted by the natives of India, and, when so planted, the incident is generally accompanied by all the solemnities of the marriage ceremony; an auspicious day is carefully selected, and the young couple are committed to mother earth. On these occasions the banyan is universally considered as the lady, while the peepul-tree, or *ficus religiosa*, is regarded as the gentleman.

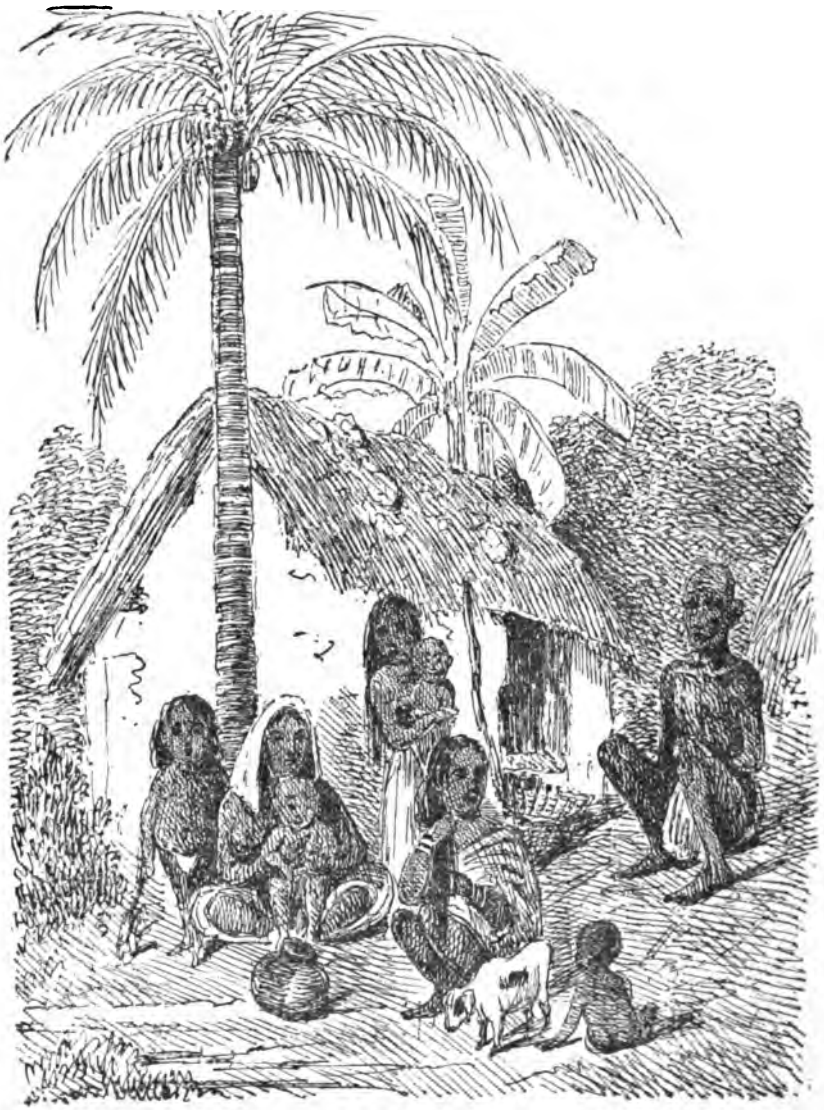
"What is the cause of this distinction I have never been able accurately to ascertain, and can only conjecture the reason to be, that the banyan extends her influence with so much subtlety and perseverance, sometimes like Delilah to the destruction of those whom she embraces; but the fact is undoubted.

"The two trees are married in due form, with all the pomp and circumstance, the music and rejoicing, of that world-wide ceremonial.

"Both are planted in close proximity, and, as an inveterate punster once observed to me, the 'seedy couple invariably reach the honours of a green old age.'

"It is interesting to observe them after some years of married life, when the foliage is thick, so closely united that the union is only discoverable by the different shades of green, the husband being always the *greenest* of the two.

"The extraordinary growth of the banyan is well worthy of careful observation.



HINDOO VILLAGE GROUP.

"The three pictures which you here see represent portions of a wonderful tree which I sketched carefully from life many years ago in the district of Beerbhoom in Bengal; all are parts of one and the same tree, which has stretched its multitudinous branches over an immense extent of country, and actually overshadows more than 400 temples.

"One of these is especially interesting, as showing precisely the manner in which the insidious feelers in their descent to earth swallow up every object in their way." So far from my lecture.

By a curious revolution of what is called the whirligig of time, our eldest son is now civil and sessions judge of this very district, and it was no slight pleasure when, during the late visit of the Prince of Wales to India, I was invited by the Prince of Sattara to go to Bombay, I found time to visit my son at the station which I know so well, where I found him with his dear wife, his tenth child and a new-born baby, and once more saw some of the picturesque objects which I had admired and sketched nearly forty years before, two of which are given on pp. 208 and 210. To return to my tale.

On leaving Beerbhoom we returned to Hooghly and reoccupied our house at Bandel. At Burdwan itself there were few subjects for the pencil, but I had the opportunity of drawing a characteristic group of a Bengalee village, in which an entire family, from grandfather to baby, were seated in front of their house, and a not less characteristic scene representing "the village barber" in the act of shaving, a party seated under the tar-tree, or fan-palm, engaged in making fans.

This tree, of which the botanical name is *Borassus*

THE VILLAGE BARBER.

MANUFACTURE OF FANS.

flabelliformis, is the tar-tree of India, from which the well-known spirit called Taree, corrupted into toddy by the English, is produced.

This tree, like all the palms, is of the "endogenous" species, that is, "growing from within," instead of "exogenous," or growing from without, as all other trees do.

A curious phenomenon, of which I shall give a full description in my second volume, is frequently seen in the form of this, and some of the other palms—and especially in the district of Shahabad—the secret of which is a puzzle to many. It shows the palm often of considerable height rising to all appearance out of another tree—the Banyan, which, extending half-way up the stem of the palm which it embraces, throws out its branches on all sides, and its roots outside the palm to the ground. Most spectators imagine that this phenomenon is produced by a seed of the palm having been dropped into the banyan; but it is just the contrary. When the palm was half-grown, a banyan seed was dropped upon its head; it there takes root, as it will wherever it rests, while the palm, indifferent to the contact, continues to grow from year to year in undisturbed elevation. The sketch of the two women in front of their cottage is an instance of the picturesque group offered by the common Indian female in her daily occupation. The two are pounding bricks with the churka. The other couple illustrate the scriptural words "Two women shall be grinding at a mill, the one shall be taken, the other left."

This is one of the many instances in which the customs and peculiarities of Indian life explain expressions of Scripture.

BRICK-POUNDING.

The "mill," as will be seen, consists of two circular stones, placed horizontally, the one above the other, with a hole in the centre of the upper one, through which the grain is passed, and a small handle to enable the woman to move it round. The action is monotonous and fatiguing, but it is effective for the purpose.

Several other such expressions, such as "lift up thy bed and walk," will be noticed in subsequent chapters.

The originals of all these were taken carefully from nature.

CHAPTER XIII.

RESUMPTION CONTROVERSY.

Party Contest.—Resumptionists and Anti-resumptionists.—The 750 Cases. — Controversy. — My Insubordination. — Refusal to obey illegal Orders. — Wigged by the Sudder Board during Absence of one of their Members.—Absent Member, Charles Tucker, returns.—Upholds my View.—Renewed Controversy with Supreme Government.—Finale.

In the last chapter I have briefly narrated the ordinary incidents of our life from the time of my appointment as special deputy collector, without making any allusion to the character and discharge of my official functions.

In 1837, however, these duties unexpectedly led to a most extraordinary and sensational embroglio, which can only be effectively discussed or understood by continuous narrative; such narrative I now, and for this reason, give in a separate chapter.

It has for years been a reproach to the Anglo-Indian, who ventures to commit himself to authorship, that he can write or think of little in the way of literary com-

position except tiger hunting or "shop," and though of late years this reproach has been in some instances undeserved, I yet think it as well, now that I have a considerable dose of official matter to administer to my readers. to keep it altogether distinct, so that it may be read and digested independently by those who condescend to notice it, without interfering with the scope of my narrative or interrupting the sequence of events, and at the same time altogether passed over by those who regard it as a bore.

In regard to what I am now about to relate, however, I may say that though it does refer to unadulterated "shop" it is not of an ordinary character, but a subject which will be read with some interest, especially by those who may have any recollection of the circumstances, as well as of the individual characters concerned in the discussion.

The following chapter, therefore, will comprise and complete the entire story, and will, I fear, be necessarily void of illustrations.

To render the narrative intelligible to ordinary readers not well up in the details of Indian administration, I must explain that, when at the commencement of our rule in India, in 1793, we made arrangements for pocketing as handsome a sum as it was practicable to secure from the revenues of the country, we discovered that, distinct and separate from the lands which had from time immemorial yielded revenues to the ruling power, there were sundry states more or less extensive which were held, or claimed to be held, under grants from emperors, kings, and chiefs, entirely exempt from taxation.

I daresay our rulers when they completed the settlement of the country would not have objected to the addition which these lands would have afforded, if they could safely or reasonably have secured it, but they refrained, perhaps wisely, from interfering with these privileged tenures (many of which were, or professed to be, devoted to religious purposes) and allowed them to remain in *statu quo*.

At the same time, however, certain regulations were passed containing sundry conditions on which these rent-free lands might be retained, and requiring all the holders to register their lands, with specification of dates and title within a fixed time.

Subsequently to this, proceedings were for some years occasionally adopted under the regulation above mentioned (XIX. of 1873), sundry tenures were upheld, others resumed, and a period of fitful ill-regulated alternation of supineness and activity succeeded. In 1836, however, under the energetic influence of Mr. Ross Donnelly Mangles, the Bengal Secretary, a dead set was made at the then-existing rent-free tenures, and special tribunals were organised for investigation.

The question was warmly discussed, and opinions were as usual divided. The "resumptionists" and "anti-resumptionists" held opposite views, the one party holding exemption from rent was an abuse injurious to the rest of the community, and only to be upheld when the validity of the title was beyond doubt or question; the others denouncing the attempt at resumption after so long a period as unjust, or at least ungenerous, and likely to create dangerous irritation.

Such, very briefly put, was the state of things when

the resumption crusade to which I refer was commenced in earnest.

I myself was selected as one of the first special deputy-collectors (as the officers were called) to carry out the scheme in Burdwan and the adjoining districts, and, as the salary allotted (1,500 rupees per month) was considerably in advance of the salary drawn by my contemporaries, I received the nomination with satisfaction, and being one who regarded exemption from taxation as in itself a nuisance and injurious to the great body of the people, I had no feeling whatever of scruple or compunction in carrying out the purposes of Government; I entered therefore actively and with easy conscience on the task.

The party controversy in the meanwhile raged high, and there were daily discussions in the papers, some of which exhibited great bitterness.

Unfortunately I was young, and youth is apt to be forgetful of the minor proprieties, whether political or social; I accordingly fell into a sort of official indiscretion or unwariness in one of my proceedings, which gave great offence, and at the same time some triumph to the anti-resumptionist party, while it led to rather "sharp practice" towards myself.

The districts to which my new jurisdiction extended were Burdwan, Hooghly, and Beerbhoom.

In Hooghly the collector, Mr. W. Belli, a singularly kind and benevolent man, had some time before, whether voluntarily or on pressure from above, commenced proceedings under the resumption law on an extensive scale; but strange to say, after all the preliminary processes had been completed, and nothing remained but to give the

final order, he had—whether from kindness, scruple, or reluctance who shall say?—refrained from passing it. When, therefore, the records of his undecided suits were transferred to me under the new arrangement, I found no less than 750 cases in this condition; every preliminary had been gone through, the parties had enjoyed every opportunity which the law afforded for establishing their title and resisting the claim of Government, and had failed to do so; nothing was left, no other order or decision was possible under the law, than the final order for resumption.

This being the case, I glanced through the whole of these cases (each record consisting of three pieces of paper) and gave the order.

My serishtadar (head ministerial officer), being older and wiser than myself, suggested that, for appearance sake, it would be well to assign different dates for the orders; but I declined, saying, that as I had passed the order there would be a certain amount of deception in so doing, and I did not care for appearance when I knew I was not doing wrong. Imprudent confidence for this nether world, where Appearance is a goddess to whom Truth and Virtue are but silent handmaids, and especially imprudent the action in this instance, when rabid anti-resumptionists were on the watch for a peg to hang their attacks on.

And soon I had to suffer for my prudish conscientiousness and contempt for outward seeming. The opposition comprised many astute members prepared to agitate against the entire system; there were the intelligent semi-Anglicised baboos fresh from school and college, and bristling with suppressed radicalism; there

were the proprietors of the resumed lands and several editors of the daily journals, sundry English attorneys, and even a stray briefless barrister or so; all on the watch, greedy for grievances, and burning with desire for agitation.

To these my 750 decisions came as a long wished-for dream. "Ruthless, terrible uncalculating autocracy, how was it possible for one brain to consider and digest in one day the merits of 750 judicial cases, and draw up or dictate righteous well-considered decisions in this vast number." It was judicial sacrilege, spoliation under the name of law; such was the cry. Letters appeared in the papers, pathetic appeals for justice, violent denunciation of the wicked man who had thus disgraced himself and dishonoured the Government.

This whirlwind of passion I confess, sensitive as I am, touched my moral nature but little, and the agitation contained, as I have already observed in regard to such mock tragedy, so much of the absurd that I could not bring myself into any condition of repentance.

I called to mind the wise suggestions of my serishtadar, however, and thought that if I had but allowed him to put different dates to my so-called *decisions*, which in fact amounted to the simple words, "It is ordered that the tenure be resumed," all this frantic vituperation and dramatic fury would have had no conceivable foundation! So I smiled and said nothing.

But I had not calculated on party feeling, which, though not often aroused in India as in England, in the present instance was violently excited. The fact is, the controversy in Calcutta had assumed large proportions;

Mr. Mangles on one side, and Mr. Dickens, the barrister, on the other, had been waging fierce war in the columns of the papers, with supporters on either side more or less zealous.

Mr. Wilberforce Bird, with the rest of the Supreme Council, were strong anti-resumptionists, hated Mr. Mangles, who returned the compliment, and were on the look-out for grounds of opposition.

To these powerful adversaries my unfortunate *faut pas* presented itself, not as a real grievance (for they must have comprehended the truth), but as a convenient and popular ground for official displeasure, and an additional argument against the proceedings of the Bengal Government. So I was driven, for a time at least, to the wall; explanation was called for, the simple facts were stated, viz. nothing was to be done but pass the order for resumption, which might have been done in 7,000 as well as 700 cases; all processes had been completed, and had the kind-hearted Mr. W. Belli done as he ought, the same orders would have been given the year before!

To have gone through the same preliminaries again on the transfer of the suits to me would have been simply absurd, if not illegal; the law directed resumption when, after notice given, the parties failed to appear. This row could never have arisen if I had consented to have different dates recorded on the decisions; I had scorned this device because not straight-forward. This was my defence, so I feared nothing else.

To all reasonable and unprejudiced men this explanation was more than sufficient; but the anti-resumption grandees of the Government had expressed displeasure,

and it was necessary to keep up the semblance, so directions were given for another officer to go through the cases again, and thus remove all cause of complaint.

This was done, to the infinite amusement and some disgust of those who understood the case, and after the empty form of a new notice, with the same result, the same order was necessarily given.

Here ended the artificial disturbance, exactly resembling in its character that which had been excited against Mr. Macaulay's Press Bill and Black Act; both were fomented by interested parties and for selfish objects. It was only when the old gentlemen of the Council countenanced the groundless complaints of the Radical rabble, that I became indignant, and begged to be relieved of my appointment.

Mr. Bird, the head of the Council, took great pains to assure me that no displeasure or disapprobation was conceived against me personally; and to make this publicly apparent, he gave me the officiating appointment of Registrar of the Sudder Court, a high berth for my standing, and showed in every possible way the sincerity of his assurance.

But the grievance of my 750 had given the anti-resumptionists a ground for snubbing Mr. Mangles and his coadjutors, and party spirit was appeased.

It was a little before this, while I was acting as collector in Burdwan that I had to pass through another rather sharp controversy with the authorities on a different point, and had thereby earned, perhaps deservedly, a character for, not insubordination exactly, but for a spirit somewhat too independent to please the autocracy of high office.

But that independence was exhibited not in a matter of routine or form, but of right and wrong. The Government wanted me to enter upon certain alluvial estates quite distinct from rent-free tenures, and measure them before any title on the part of Government had been established. I declined to do this, pointed out the illegality, and on the Board insisting, ventured to declare that "I had rather lose my appointment than be made the medium of the illegal violation of private rights."

This brought me into serious disfavour at the time with the awful Sudder Board, of which Mr. (now Sir Charles) Trevelyan was secretary; and I well remember, when passing some days in the house of Mr. Mangles, his saying while at his desk, "I am writing you a wigging for insubordination, Tayler; but you need not mind, it will not do you much harm."

This was in reference to the particular question mentioned, on which the Board had sent a report to Government complaining of my presumption and impertinence, and passing official censure on my proceedings.

The sequel of this little squabble was curious. When the Board decided the question against me, two only of the members were present; Mr. C. Tucker, the third member, was absent. The decision they gave was unaccompanied by any reason or argument, and was evidently written under the irritation caused by my continuous refusal to obey their order.

The Board requested Government to reprimand me, and mentioned the order to which I had objected. The Secretary to Government (Mr. Mangles) complied with the Board's request, and passed on the wigging; but just

then Mr. C. Tucker, who had been absent at the sandheads, returned, and found that an important question had been decided in his absence, with no reason or argument recorded for the decision, and therefore requested the Government to return the papers, and hold their judgment in abeyance. He then entered upon the subject, and in an elaborate minute showed that my view was indisputably correct, and that the order of the Board was unauthorised by the law. This was not disputed, and the discussion ended. I swallowed my wigging without any injury to my digestion, and the Board was silent under its discomfiture.

But the whole subject of the 750 decisions was not quite concluded. Mr. John Peter Grant, the able Secretary of the Government of India, perhaps feeling that his masters had not exhibited that supremacy of wisdom which may have been expected from them, took up the question, and wrote an exhaustive and elaborate letter on the subject. His letter was confided to me for comment and reply, and when I had done so, I had the satisfaction of being credited on all hands with complete and unquestionable victory on all the important points of controversy.

CHAPTER XIV.

CALCUTTA.

Arrival of Mr. Macaulay.—Quotation from Work of Mr. O. Trevelyan.—First Interview of Mr. Macaulay with Lord William Bentinck.—Extract from *Life of Meadows Taylor*.—His First Meeting with Lord William Bentinck.—Important Action of Mr. Macaulay.—Censorship of the Press.—The Black Act.—Excited Controversy.—Passing of the Act.—Macaulay's Speech in Parliament.—Anecdote of Mr. Ross Mangles.—Grace before Dinner.—Correspondence regarding the Hooghly Imambarah.—Letters from C. Tucker and R. Mangles.

It was during the years which I have just been describing that many interesting events took place in public and official life. Lord William Bentinck had in 1834 been driven by ill-health to the Neilgherries, where he remained until he returned to England.

A very remarkable and embarrassing blunder had been committed in the new arrangements of Government, which led to awkward complications, but not sufficiently important to describe in detail in a work like this.

The most noticeable fact was the arrival of Mr. T. B. Macaulay as Legal Member of Council.

Mr. Macaulay had, in the first instance, been detained at Madras by Lord William Bentinck, who being alone at Ootacamund, could not form an official quorum to constitute a council.

Miss Macaulay, his sister, who accompanied him, came on to Calcutta, and lived with Bishop Wilson during her brother's absence.

It is interesting to read in the *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay*, lately published by Mr. Otto Trevelyan, of the impression made on that eminent statesman at the first interview with Lord William Bentinck.

"I found him" (Lord Macaulay writes in one of his letters) "sitting by a fire in a carpeted library. He received me with the greatest kindness, frankness, and hospitality. He is, as far as I can yet judge, all that I have heard, that is to say, rectitude, openness, and good nature personified."

The author adds: "Many months of close friendship and common labours did but confirm Macaulay in this first view of Lord William Bentinck. His estimate of the singularly noble character survives in the closing sentence of the essay on Lord Clive; and is inscribed on the base of the statue, which, standing in front of the Town Hall, may be seen far and wide over the expanse of grass that serves as the park, the parade-ground, and the race-course of Calcutta."

The following extract from the *Life of Captain Meadows Taylor*, lately published, gives a just idea of this nobleman's kind and sympathetic character:—

"It was at this time, when I was in sore trouble at the

loss of my second child, that I had the good fortune to be introduced to the then Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck. He was staying at the hills, and had often noticed my boy, not knowing whose child he was.

"When he died he wrote me a kind letter of sympathy, asking me to come and see him. I did so as soon as I was able, and so faint and weak was I that I could not stand when I entered his room.

"He took me in his arms, laid me down on a sofa, and sent for some wine."

Heartily can I, as far as my experience goes, endorse this tribute of admiration and respect for that great man; irrespective of the deep feeling of gratitude I shall ever retain for his and Lady William's undeserved and exceptional kindness, which I have described in Chapter VI.

It was in the latter months of 1834 that Mr. Macaulay reached Calcutta; Lady William Bentinck having in the meantime invited his sister to stay with her. He also took up his abode at Government House, where he remained some six weeks. In November he removed to a large house in Chowringhee Road, now occupied by the Bengal Club.

In was some few months after this that we reached Calcutta on our way to my new appointment in Burdwan.

The arrival of Mr. Macaulay in Calcutta was an event. By far the most able man that had ever entered the Indian Council, he at once took the lead in all the important questions then under discussion, and it must be admitted that in most he took the sound, liberal, and statesman-like view.

Specially his celebrated minute in regard to the censorship of the Indian press, which had existed up to the year of his arrival, will, at the present day, be read with interest. At the time, his opinions were accepted both by the members of the Indian Council and the Court of Directors, and the censorship was removed.

But Mr. Macaulay was not allowed to carry out his several reforms in peace. His liberal sentiments in regard to the freedom of the press in India, which might at the present day be read and studied with advantage when the same question is creating such excitement throughout India, ought to have secured him the support of all enlightened and reasonable men; but whatever impression may have been created by these sentiments was more than counterbalanced by another measure which he introduced and carried, and which was satirically denominated the "Black Act."

To make this subject intelligible to those of my readers who are innocent of Indian affairs, as well as to those who, though not innocent, regard such affairs as a bore, I will in a few words endeavour to give them some sort of idea of the *mise-en scene* which produced the agitation I am about to mention.

They must be told, then, that there were two High Courts of Justice in Bengal, the "Supreme" and the Sudder Court. The difference between the two was this—the Supreme Court was established by Royal Charter, and was composed of judges appointed from England, who had no connection with the Civil Service; the Sudder Court was composed of Indian civilians who had passed through the usual career, and had been

selected for a seat on the Bench. Now it had been for years past the rule that any Englishman who wished to appeal from a decision of the lower local courts should be allowed to lodge the appeal before the Supreme, and not the Sudder Court.

This privilege, for such it was deemed, was highly prized by Englishmen, though on what grounds, now that the excitement of controversy has passed, it is rather difficult to understand.

Prized it was, however, though rather more, I fancy, by the lawyers who pocketed the fees than by the suitors themselves. At all events, the "Black Act" was the cause of an agitation which may fairly be said to have convulsed society for a time.

Several barristers took the lead; public meetings were called; scurrilous articles filled the columns of the daily journals. One impassioned orator hinted that Mr. Macaulay ought to be lynched at the very least. The meetings became so fierce and uproarious, that abuse was freely bandied about among the agitators themselves, challenges were exchanged, and the extreme acmé of human absurdity was attained.

The Act, however, was passed, and scarcely a voice was raised in the Mofussil by those whom the reform principally affected. An attempt was subsequently made in Parliament to have the new law set aside, but the House of Commons declined to interfere.

It is impossible to deny, on a calm consideration of the facts, that the opposition, as conducted, was not only unreasonable in itself, but in the last degree discreditable to the agitators.

When the question was brought before Parliament,

Mr. Macaulay made a most eloquent speech, which Mr. Trevelyan has given in his interesting work.

Having, as I have before stated, left Burdwan in 1838 and taken a house in Hoogly, only sixteen miles from Calcutta, I was enabled frequently to run down to the Presidency and cultivate the acquaintance and friendship of the many distinguished men whom I had met in 1835 on my way to join my appointment at Burdwan. It was during one of these visits that I was introduced to Mr. Macaulay, who came to dine with Ross Mangles, in whose house I was staying. On that occasion an amusing incident occurred—interesting only as showing the weakness of human nature, even in great and wise men—and the power of ridicule, even in the smallest matters.

Ross Mangles was at this time under deep religious impressions, and one of the minor subjects which had been lately discussed between us was the custom of saying grace before dinner. This he had not been in the habit of doing, but had recently resolved, after discussion with Mr. Macan and myself, to follow the custom.

When dinner was announced we all went down. Mangles had evidently the desire to carry out his good intentions, but, unfortunately, as we were all taking our places, Mr. Macaulay was talking and laughing with his partner, little suspecting the internal struggle that was going on. I looked at Mangles—he hesitated for a moment; but Mr. M. was so facetious, and the lady whom he had handed down was so intensely amused at his conversation, and laughed so loudly, that he could not summon courage to attempt it, and—sat down!

Such an incident is trivial, and perhaps scarcely worthy

of record; but "trifles form the sum of human things," and this little incident illustrates at least the two weaknesses which I have mentioned above.

This was the last time I saw Mr. Macaulay, and before my own official controversy had assumed its serious guise, he had quitted Calcutta, having left his mark behind him in the minutes and proceedings on Education, and last, though not least, on the great Penal Code, which he had prepared in conjunction with Mr. Cameron.

Time and experience have thoroughly vindicated all the measures introduced by this great statesman.

Another very important question was mooted about this time, and as the two principal officers concerned did me the honour of consulting me upon it, in spite of my youth and resumption misfeasances, and as their sentiments on the subject are highly honourable to them, I will give a few specimens of their letters. The two officers to whom I refer are Ross Mangles and Charles Tucker, the first being the well-known Bengal secretary, and the second a member of the Sudder Board, the highest office in the Revenue Department, while I was only a deputy collector.

I give one letter only of each, as more might be tedious, and these are sufficient to show the conscientious feelings by which both were actuated.

The subject under discussion was the Imambarah at Hooghly, of which I will here extract Dr. Hunter's description.

"The principal building in Hugli is the Imambarah, a Shiah institution for perpetuating the memory of the twelve Imams, constructed out of funds which had accumulated from an endowment originally left by a

wealthy Muhammadan gentleman, Muhammad Mohsin. This edifice forms a good specimen of Mumammadan architecture in Bengal, and is thus described by Babu Bholanath Chandra in his *Travels of a Hindu*, vol. i. page 13:—

"'The courtyard is spacious and grand. The trough in the middle is a small-sized tank. The two-storied buildings all round are neat and elegant. The great hall has a royal magnificence; it is profusely adorned in the Muhammadan style, with chandeliers and lanterns, and wall shades of all colours of the rainbow. The surface of the walls is painted with blue and red inscriptions from the Koran. Nothing can be more gorgeous than the doors of the gateway; they are richly gilded all over, and upon them is inscribed in golden letters the date and history of the masjid. Hugli is also memorable as the place where the first printing-press was set up in Bengal in 1778, with a view to the publication of a Bengali grammar.'"

The "Imambarah" referred to was placed under the charge of Syud Keramut Ali, a most worthy Mahomedan, who had done good service to the unfortunate Captain Conolly in Afghanistan.

There is a portrait of him in Captain Conolly's published work, taken from a likeness which I drew of him in Calcutta for that lamented officer.

The following are the letters:—

Extract of Letter from C. Tucker.

"I will now ask your advice, because I know you will give it me faithfully, and it is on a point which may be of vital importance to my future *earthly* prospects. You have probably seen the

reports in the papers of the Board having refused to be concerned in any way in the building or repair of the *Imambarah* at Hoogly. We have not yet gone so far. We have as yet merely solicited from Government a reconsideration of the orders, and pointed out that neither does the law (19 of 1810) require it of us; neither is there any necessity for our interference, there being a 'Mootoowullee' in charge of the endowment; neither is it agreeable to the Mahomedans themselves that we should meddle with such things, and finally that it is distressing to our Christian profession to be engaged in any such matters. Now Government may or may not withdraw their orders. If they will not, I desire your faithful opinion, as you will answer before your God, how far I am permitted—consistently with my duty as a Christian—to comply with such an order. The order is this, and it is addressed to the Board: 'You will issue advertisements inviting tenders for building an *Imambarah* at Hoogli.' Now you may perceive in what this will involve us. Selecting a plan for the building out of the number that may be presented, superintending the building through our subordinates, and a variety of other details, from which we cannot withdraw after taking the first step. You will, on carefully perusing Reg. 19 of 1810, see a very broad distinction made between religious and secular endowments. It is expressly buildings of the latter description that the Regulation requires us to look after, to repair, pull down, etc.; and regarding religious endowments we have, if necessity so requires it, the general superintendence of all lands granted for their support, and to see that the funds are not misappropriated to purposes other than those for which the founder bequeathed them.

"Thus far the interference required of us may be said to be passive, and what, as the rulers of the country, toleration to all classes and equal protection to all subjects demand of us.

"But when called upon to be actively engaged in an erection of buildings for worship which we know to be false and hateful to our God, the line appears to be passed, and co-operation appears to be sinful. Examine the case carefully, and with prayer; tell me whether it is consistent to acknowledge the lawfulness of interference in any shape, and to deny it in this particular instance. If not consistent, then tell me whether the whole be

lawful or unlawful, by which I mean in the sight of God; in other words, may I as a sincere Christian obey the orders of Government? I cannot give you a more convincing proof of my confidence in your friendship and faithfulness than in consulting you on this question. There is no hurry; a reply a week hence will do.

"Ever affectionately yours,

(Signed) "C. TUCKER."

"Calcutta, August 30th.

"MY DEAR TAYLER,

"I believe that, through God's goodness in disposing matters and men's minds, all will go as we could wish regarding the *Imambarah*. As the Christian rulers of a Pagan and Mahomedan land we are undoubtedly in a difficult position, for we are bound to dispense justice and afford protection to our subjects (for those who have money in trust for so-called religious purposes as well as others), and it is no easy matter to draw the line between efficient protection and encouragement. All that I have maintained is that the more completely you abjure anything like interference, and the more in accordance with Christian feelings you draw the line, the easier will it be to draw it; that if you build mosques, why not temples of Kali? if temples, why not images (by the best sculptors) of the false goddess? if images, why not obscene pictures? if obscene pictures, why not dancing girls, such as the collectors at Madras are obliged (I am told) to muster and pay monthly?

"We have recommended the Government to rescind altogether Regulation XIX. of 1810, as far as it relates to religious endowments, and to leave such trusts to the 'a posteriori' protection of the Courts of Law, instead of disgusting alike heathen and Mahomedan subjects and Christian servants by meddling with them 'a priori.'

"I hope and believe that I do desire to learn the truth, and I must heartily thank you for the stimulus and aid which you have afforded me in the pursuit. I shall be glad from time to time, as leisure permits to consult with you.

"Believe me,

"Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) "ROSS MANGLES."

The question which had thus troubled the conscience of these gentlemen was eventually disposed of to their satisfaction, and all unnecessary interference, repugnant to Christian feeling and conscience, dispensed with.

The following letters and extracts connected with the great resumption campaign will be read by some, at least, with amusement if not with interest.

My excuse for their introduction is that I am anxious to show that although the Supreme Government, in its anti-resumption *rôle*, took decided part in the disapproval of one act in my resumption proceedings, their animadversions were not directed against me personally.

My personal antagonists were the two Special Commissioners Mr. Barwell and Cracroft, two rather touchy old gentlemen, who, having for some reason or other taken offence, had constantly indulged in a species of what may be called official "nagging," of which I will here give an amusing specimen.

One day I received a letter from one—I forget which, of these magnates, with whom I was in constant communication—returning a paper which I had lately sent up, with my name rather obscurely subscribed.

The word had been written hurriedly, and the writing was undoubtedly open to criticism; but instead of calling my attention to the fact, and directing me to take greater pains in future, a rebuke which I should have doubtless accepted with due respect and humility, the Special Commissioners wrote that they "enclosed the paper, and desired me to enquire, ascertain, and report to them whose was the illegible signature affixed."

Of course they knew as well as I did, but the man-

date was a snub in irony. This puerile proceeding, with its dull and inappropriate affectation of ignorance, tempted me, I am sorry to say, to a slightly satirical reply. I wrote in answer, that "in obedience to the order received, I had made careful inquiries, and with some difficulty had ascertained that the signature was that of Mr. William Tayler."

I did not then realise the great truth, since so painfully brought home to me, that even in the smallest matters "ridicule kills." This little bit of ill-timed fun made bitter enemies of the punctilious pair, and led them into a system of overbearing opposition, the extent and character of which will be best appreciated by perusal of the following letters.

"Calcutta, December 7th, 1838.

"My dear Tayler,

"Mangles sent me the accompanying papers * to read according to your request. I concur in his marginal notes, and think your cause will be much strengthened by weeding your letter to Government of every expression that may be construed into a desire to retort.

"In defending and justifying yourself you condemn your accusers.

"*You have done this completely*, and they ought to be ashamed of themselves.

"You cannot be much longer troubled with either Barwell or Cracroft. They are both going away, the former to England, the latter to the hills.

"I remain,
"My dear Tayler,
"Ever yours affectionately,
(Signed) "C. Tucker."

* These papers contained my letters in defence of the principle on which my decisions were based.

The following correspondence will give a correct idea of the character of the general controversy regarding my proceedings.

The piquant little note is from John Lowis, then member of the Sudder Board, one of the most distinguished members of the Service. It refers to the appointment of another officer to go through the 750 cases and pass fresh orders.

The "Ross" referred to is Ross Donelly Mangles, who had just left India. The note shows a clear and correct appreciation of the *animus* and object of the order of which I was the mere "scape-goat."

"My dear Tayler,

"I have written to Currie about your leave.

"I think the appointment of another man to try those cases is a mere truckling to the clamour of the mob or the lawyers! I am certain you need be under no apprehension further.

"If you cross-examine Bird you will probably find that it is Ross they mean to go at through you.

"Fine fun this firing at him now he is gone. Had he been here he'd have laid him (Bird) on the flat of his broad back long ago.

"Yours sincerely,

(Signed) "J. Lowis."

When after the rambling and illogical party discussion regarding the 750 cases (which attained about as much celebrity as the celebrated 600 of the Crimean campaign) had been brought to an official close, the Supreme Government, though carefully excepting me from personal condemnation or censure, persisted, for consistency's

sake, as I have before stated, in the re-investigation, or re-hearing, or re-sitting upon, the disputed cases.

I could not but regard this as an indirect slur upon my proceedings, and feeling indignant at a measure which all felt to be an unmeaning party blow, I expressed my desire to be relieved of my appointment altogether. But though the Government would not—indeed, could not, without formally acknowledging their own imbecility—withdraw their order, they were very anxious to retain me in my office that I might carry out the identification and settlement of the resumed tenures.

The following letter from Mr. Ross Donelly Mangles will explain, more fully than any remarks I can make, the true position of affairs.

"Calcutta, Feb. 11th, 1888.

"My dear Tayler,

"I have duly thought of the subject matter of your letter, and have taken counsel thereon with Lowis and Halliday, and our unanimous verdict is *stand fast*.

"You will not escape the attacks of the newspapers (*quantum valeant*) by changing your appointment; on the contrary, it will be said by the gentlemen of the Press, and believed by those who know nothing about the matter, that you have been turned out for your misfeasances.

"Cracroft and Barwell, your foes, have both left the Special Commissionership.

"The latter has left the country, and the former goes with me in the *Repulse*.

"There will, therefore, be no more battle for you, I hope and believe, except the silly ravings of the ignorant writers in the papers, which ought to be to you as the 'idle wind which you regard not.' Everybody whom I have seen thinks that the anti-resumptionists have been floored in the late discussion, and I have

reason to know that they are horribly ashamed of the gross mistakes of 'law and fact' into which the Landholders' Society fell in their recent letter to Government.

"Then as to the change of ministry, I am happy to say that Lord Auckland has recently sent down a very staunch minute, well calculated to keep the Government straight, and old Christopher Smith is a host in himself, on the right side, which he stands to like a lion. Lord Auckland's firmness makes matters look much more brightly than they did, and Halliday is determined to carry the general matter through.

"My advice, therefore, is that you remain in your present situation.

"If you do as well in it as you anticipate, you will establish a strong claim upon the Government, and I never remember such a claim being otherwise than most availing.

"With our best love,
"Believe me,
"Ever affectionately yours,
(Signed) "Ross Mangles."

Acting for a time on this advice, though with some reluctance and no little disgust, I retained my post. A discussion soon after arose with Government regarding my salary, and the subjoined letters from the Private Secretary will show that, however much I had suffered as the "scape-goat" of a party, I had every reason to be gratified at the feeling displayed in the highest quarters towards myself personally, *malgée* the 750 grievance.

"Calcutta, February 10th, 1838.

"My Dear Sir,

"I have had the pleasure of laying before the Honourable the Deputy-Governor of Bengal your letter dated the 9th inst. to the address of Mr. Mangles.

"You will no doubt ere this have received official intelligence of

the rate of salary which you are to receive—the highest, by the way, granted to any of your contemporaries—and His Honor desires me to say that when a longer period of service will have entitled you to a higher rate of remuneration, you shall be amongst the first, if not the first, of your standing to receive it.

"I remain,
"Yours faithfully,
(Signed) "E. HUTCHINSON.
"Private Secretary.

"To W. Tayler Esq.
"Hooghly.

"87 Chowringhee Road,
"July 13th, 1838.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I had duly the pleasure to receive your last letter, which, however, I have not at this moment by me to refer to, to the Honorable the Deputy-Governor.

"I have received His Honor's instructions to acquaint you, in reply, that so soon as the rules of the Service will permit, your allowances shall be increased, that is, so soon as any person of junior standing may be in the receipt of a higher rate of salary than yourself.

"I remain,
"Yours very truly,
(Signed) "E. HUTCHINSON.

"To W. Tayler, Esq.
"Special Deputy-Collector,
"Hooghly."

The conclusion of the whole business was that after carrying on the work of my old office for some time, though with an unwilling mind, I was at length, at my special request, relieved, and the permanent appointment of Magistrate and Collector of Cuttack was given me.

The correspondence on the subject of my transfer between myself and Mr. Rutherford, the Private Secretary to the Deputy Governor is here given. The whole tone and spirit of the letters exhibit the same kind consideration on the part of the Deputy Governor as was shown by his predecessor.

"Calcutta, August 7th, 1889.

"DEAR SIR,

"Having shown your letter of this date to Mr. Robertson, he desires me to say that it was far from his intention to subject you to any mortification by retaining you in the mere revenue branch of your late appointment, on the nomination of another to the discharge of the judicial portion of its duties.

"Mr. R. begs me to call to your recollection that he some time since offered you the Acting Magistracy of Purneah, but as he now understands you to desire what he did not before know that you wished for, he will make arrangements for your speedy removal to some other district, though he cannot at present promise immediate promotion.

"Yours faithfully,

"H. RUTHERFORD,

"Private Secretary."

"MY DEAR TAYLER,

"Pray excuse my not having sooner replied to your letter, but I was all day yesterday too much engaged to attend to it. If it will afford you the smallest satisfaction, I shall be happy to hear whatever you wish to say to me on the subject, but I would recommend you to address the Government officially, and afford the explanation of which you think the case is susceptible.

"This is the only way in which Government can be got to agree to any modification of the orders which have been passed, and indeed in no other can any such modification be of the smallest use to you. I am quite sure that it is with the greatest reluctance anything unpleasant to you has been said at all, and if you can show that you have been harshly dealt with, there will be no

reluctance to do you the most ample justice. I should hope that your appointment to act as Registrar of the Sudder will prevent the Court from going further than the Government has gone, as it must be clear that had the latter even reason to doubt your zeal for the public service, you would not so soon have been placed, even temporarily, in so important a situation, for which the best men that can be found are invariably selected.

"Yours very truly,

"W. W. Bird.

"October 2nd, 1839."

Shortly after these events, in spite of the desire of the Government to retain me in my office of Special Deputy Collector, I was happily relieved from the appointment, and gladly retiring from the arena of a strife which had betrayed the Government itself into irrational action, made arrangements for returning to my old station Cuttack, where my first *dêbut* in official life had been made, and where I was now deputed as Magistrate and Collector. I left Calcutta a wiser if not a better man, enlightened though not edified by my first practical experience of that mysterious spirit of party which, though not rampant in India as in England, had on the present occasion, as it had during the controversy with Mr. Macaulay, roused an unreasonable antagonism in the so-called "public," and betrayed several able and distinguished men into inconsistency and injustice, of which unhappy I was made the scape-goat.

My refusal to carry out orders injurious to individuals because the orders were illegal, my acknowledged victory over the Sudder Board when the question was subjected to investigation, the corresponding triumph over the dicta of the Supreme Government in regard to the process of investigation in resumption suits, and lastly, my

infinitesimal joke regarding the obscure signature of Mr. William Tayler—though they had, as the letters quoted clearly show, in no way lessened the support and friendship shown to me by many distinguished men—had presented me to the view of official red-tapists as a somewhat obstinate and independent being, not likely to sacrifice conscience to expediency, and perhaps somewhat too ready to resent, though in humorous guise, a needless and unprofitable censure.

That this view of my character subsequently led to an unworthy opposition to my preferment in Calcutta, where musical proficiency and moral subservience were considered as leading qualifications, will be seen in a future chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

CUTTACK—THIRD VISIT.

Satisfaction at leaving the Scene of Strife.—Start for Cuttack with four Youngest Children.—Peculiar Arrangements.—Ass's Milk necessary.—Donkey obtains Place under Boards of Cabin.—Remarks upon the Ass.—His Character and general Position in Society.—The Ass in India.—Punishment of Tasheer.—Ass ridden by "Seetula," the Goddess of Small-pox.—Mahomedan Legend of the Ass at the Deluge.—Satan clung to his Tail for the Purpose of getting in.—Anecdote of Billi Taylor.—The Alexandrian Donkey.—Awful Adventure on the River.—Narrow Escape of being run down by large Ship.—The Bhore, or Tidal Wave.—Second terrible Danger.—Eventual Arrival at Cuttack.

GRATIFIED by the distinct assurance of the Deputy-Governor of Bengal, and with the practical proof which accompanied it, that my official character was in no way affected by what had passed, and fully understanding that the "re-investigation," as it was absurdly called, of the celebrated 750 cases, was merely a tribute paid to themselves by the dominant anti-resumption party, I was not at all sorry to retire from the scene of unprofit-

able controversy and official despotism, and wend my way with wife and family to our old and well-known station Cuttack.

We had two years before, as I have related, sent our two eldest children home, and one little daughter we buried at Burdwan; but we had the remaining four as companions of our voyage, our last child having been born a short time before we started.

The rains being over, and the cold season fast setting in, we believed we should have fine weather for our trip by sea, and consequently consented to sail to the coast for the third time in a country salt-sloop, rather than endure the long and fatiguing land-journey by dâk.

Our arrangements were peculiar. Our baby was partly nourished by ass's milk, and it was consequently indispensable that she should have it.

How to keep a donkey on board a salt-sloop was a puzzle; but the difficulty was overcome.

A space for the humble animal was found underneath the floor of the little compartment which formed part of our cabin. As it was large enough for his body but not for his head and neck, a square hole was cut in our floor, and we had the pleasure of his head and ears in our immediate vicinity, while the person who milked her managed to creep down by a circuitous passage below the deck.

And here, while touching on the valuable services rendered in our difficulties by the humble and unpretentious quadruped, I am tempted to make a few remarks upon his character and qualifications, as generally estimated throughout the world.

And this will be the more appropriate in the present work, as I have already paid some attention to the animal world of Calcutta—the crow, the tattoo, and the adjutant.

The ass in India bears no better reputation than in other parts of the world. Here, as in most countries, he is a byeword and reproach throughout the length and breadth of the land, and in the estimation of all save the dhobees (washermen), and some others of the lower orders, is altogether vile. "Khur dimagh," or donkey-brain, is a soubriquet for a dolt; while "gudha," donkey, is in the mouth of an abusive oriental as frequently as "jackass" is in that of an European.

There is an Arabian proverb equally impolite to donkeys and copying-clerks: "Al kateb kul khiman," *i.e.* "The copyist is a donkey!"

The universal prevalence of this ill-repute is a curious fact which deserves notice.

The Indian ass is a very small ass. His colour varies

from light sandy brown to the darkest hue, approaching almost black. He is the slave of the "Dhobee" (washerman), and as the little creature is seen staggering under an atlas of dirty clothes, with a boy or man perched on the very top of his tail, he reads a lesson of patience and long-suffering which many a two-legged donkey, fretting under the light affliction and petty burden of his lot, might profit by.

One of the most ignominious and degrading punishments in India, borrowed from the Mahomedan law, was "tasheer." This consisted in mounting the culprit on a donkey, with his feet to the tail, with one side of his hair and whiskers shaven, and parading him to the sound of tom-tom and other music through the streets of the town.

The only honourable vocation assigned to the ass in India is the conveyance of "Seetula," the goddess of small-pox, who is always figured astride the "unhastie" beast.

In a curious book which I have, entitled *Ancient Mysteries Described*," there is an account of the "Ancient Festival of the Ass," which was formerly celebrated in France:—

"The ass was another Typhonian animal, and was held in great abhorrence; in some places there was a custom of throwing an ass down a precipice at stated periods, as an expression of hatred to the evil being. The inhabitants of other districts carried their detestation of this animal still farther, so that they even scrupled to use trumpets, because their sound was thought like the braying of an ass."

Plutarch pretends that it was in consequence of the

ass being red that it was considered an appropriate emblem of Typho, who was supposed to be of that colour.

The ass is said to bray when he sees the devil, and for this reason: the last animal that entered with Noah into the Ark was the ass, and "Iblees" (Satan) clung to his tail and got in with him.—Lane's *Arabian Nights*; Notes to Chapter IX.

I have been tempted to give these stray notes to the subject of the suffering and humble donkey because I look at the poor animal as, without one exception, the most ill-used of God's creatures, and I have always hoped to hear of some charitable society of influence taking up its cause, and carrying out some practical measures of relief.

In some countries the ass is not in the same painful state of degradation; and in 1869, while I was stopping for the day at Alexandria, on my way to India, I witnessed a sight—a donkey actually handsome, if not engaging; and, comically enough, he was my namesake, as was communicated in a truly ridiculous way.

Returning from a stroll with my friends and fellow-passengers, Mr. and Mrs. Sherer, we were assailed by a posse of donkey-boys, who were extolling their different animals. One, shouting above the rest, brought forward his donkey, reiterating, "Here 's fine donkey! beautiful donkey! Here 's Billi Taylor!" For the moment we fancied that the boys had discovered my name, as I had been sketching the animal in the morning, but it was only a coincidence; the ass's name and my nickname were the same.

Having been tempted to this, I fear, tedious digression, I must return to our doings. When all our arrange-

ments were completed we went on board. It was a wretched little vessel, only intended for the transport of salt. The crew was native, headed by a Serang, and the accommodation was of the scantiest; but the weather was fine, and as we hoped it would continue so, we regarded the roughing with our dear little children, and the ass, as decided fun!

Our prospects, however, were not to be realised. It was ordered that in the course of that little trip we should twice be exposed to imminent danger.

It happened to be the particular day of the month when the bhore or "humar" comes up from the sea. The bhore, as many of my readers will know, is the

great tidal wave which periodically is thrown up (I believe once a month) from the ocean, and comes with tremendous force up the Hoogly river, past Calcutta, and ascends, though with diminished violence, above the capital to Serampore and Hoogly.

The wave is like a huge wall many feet in height. It advances steadily with a roar, and though preparations are always made in expectation of its approach, it plays "Old Harry" with small vessels, boats, and all minor craft upon the river.

On the evening of our departure our little sloop, with its precious treasure, had gone down the river some distance when, daylight failing, our Serang stopped her course and cast anchor.

We ourselves were supremely ignorant of all the details of navigation, and trusted entirely to the experienced commander, never asking whether we were in the channel, on one side of it or the other.

The night advanced and we all went to bed, with the donkey's head and ears appearing at the end of the cabin.

After some hours, in the depth of sleep, which appeared as so many minutes, I awoke, hearing a voice, apparently very near us, roaring out curses without limit. I jumped out of bed, and, "accoutred as I was," with some stray addition to my covering, rushed on deck.

The sight which I beheld was appalling. Within some hundred yards of our little vessel was an enormous ship, with bare masts, which came out sharp and clear against the sky, and in her wake another equally large ship. They were coming up slowly from the direction of

the sea, dragging their anchors. The ships were the *Earl of Hardwicke* and the *Southampton*.

A man on board one of these vessels (I forget which came first), whether captain or officer in charge I never knew, was standing at the prow, and was bawling to us in a ferocious tone and blasphemous language, telling us to get out of the way, or they would run us down and be d——d to us.

Not a moment was to be lost. Slow as was the monster's advance, every minute lessened the distance between us, and it was evident that we were anchored in the very centre of the channel.

I rushed to the end of our little sloop, and roared in a feeling of desperation and horror:

"For God's sake! drop your anchor. There are English ladies on board—you will run us down."

A dead silence ensued; my heart was in my mouth. But the next moment, to my inexpressible relief, I heard the order given "Let go the anchor." There was a rattling sound and the noble ships were stopped—stopped literally not more than twenty yards from us.

It was a merciful and most narrow escape. Had it not been for my remonstrance and the mention of "English ladies," I feel convinced we should have been run down.

Directly the ships were stayed, the master pilot, or whoever he was, came off in a boat and boarded us, and began a rude complaint at our being anchored where we were. But I stopped him short, and threatened to report him to the authorities for his barbarity and insolence.

It ended in our raising our anchor, and he pioneered

us to one side of the channel, where our serang ought to have placed us.

When we had anchored, the great ship again took up her anchor, and the two vessels drifted majestically by us, this time to be admired without anxiety or alarm. The night was calm and the moon at its full.

The secret of their movement was that the bhore, or tidal wave, was coming up, and the captains wished to take advantage of it in reaching Calcutta.

I need not say how thankful we were for what really was a narrow and hairbreadth escape from destruction.

But this one short voyage was destined to be again interrupted.

We had fondly imagined that the fine weather had set in, and that we should find the sea in the Bay of Bengal as smooth as a mill-pond; but no sooner had we quitted the river and entered into the bay, than we were horrified to find a strong wind blowing, which increased every hour—in fact we had come in for the tail of a furious gale, and there we were in a poor native craft, with a native crew, four darling children, and the subterranean donkey. The only other passengers on board were a Mr. and Mrs. B., with whom we were not acquainted.

The sensation was not pleasant, even without other cause of alarm; but little was I prepared for what was to follow.

I was talking to the serang on deck about the weather, the distance, &c., and I could not help observing that he seemed distracted and nervous.

We were approaching Balasore, one of the stations on the coast, and after some hesitation he told me we

were getting near to a well-known bar of sand just opposite that station, which we should have to cross. He added that the tide was at low water, and if the weather were fine we could anchor till the water rose before he attempted to take the vessel across, but in the terrible gale then blowing it would be impossible, and we must take our chance.

His whole manner and expression convinced me that he was alarmed, and he admitted on further questioning that there undoubtedly was great danger, as if the water were not sufficient the vessel would strike the bar.

It was a painful disclosure. My wife and children were in the cabin below, uncomfortable and alarmed, but not fully conscious of the imminent danger.

I remained on deck with the serang and the man who heaves the log. We all stood at the prow close to the water's edge, with our eyes fixed on the sea silently—oh, how anxiously, listening to the leadsman's cry! As we approached the bar the water became gradually less.

"Teen baam" (three fathoms), "do bam" (two), "ek bam" (one), came in succession.

The suspense was awful. At last "ek bilis" (one hand breadth) brought my heart to my mouth. A few inches less and we were gone! Another throw. Thank God, we were safe, the water was deeper, the vessel had crossed the bar!

I cannot at this distance of time worthily describe my feelings.

I rushed down to the cabin and told my wife of the danger we had passed, and of God's great mercy in preserving us.

Had we struck that bar in such a gale as was then

blowing we must inevitably have been lost. The native crew would have deserted us, and we should have been helpless.

On this occasion we did not go as far as Pooree by sea, but turned up the river to a spot where we disembarked, and then went in palankeens across country to Cuttack.

It was no slight relief to enter into our house, which had been prepared for our reception; grateful, I hope, for our preservation, and only too glad to be at peace.

The donkey followed us at its leisure, doubtless as much relieved as ourselves, though not so fully conscious of the peril we had passed.

CHAPTER XVI.

CUTTACK ONCE MORE.

Voyage to Cuttack for the Third Time.—Our Son Graham and Pony. — Residents.—F. Dalrymple.—Juggernath.—Description.—Change from Cuttack to Pooree.—Terrible Cyclone.—Disastrous Effects.—Lieutenant Thuillier.—Important Services rendered by Him in the Survey Department.—Severe Illness of my Wife.—Leave our House and go to Chowleagounge.—Her Partial Recovery.—Birth of Eighth Child.—Return to Calcutta.—Leave for the Cape of Good Hope in the *Owen Glendower*.

Our days during the year which we spent in this our old station were quiet and uneventful. We had, as I have related, sent our two eldest children to England some time before, but still had four with us, as shown in the little group annexed. Our second boy, now the father of grown-up children, had become a capital rider for such a child. We had a beautiful pony, formerly belonging to Lady William Bentinck, which she lent me to ride when I stayed at Barrackpore after my illness, and had given me on her departure from India. Mounted

on this he used to do the "grand signor" with his two bearers, groom (syce), and chuprassee (Government servant). Our friends, the Edward Trevors, with Mrs. Trevor's sister, Miss Hunter, whom we had known so intimately at Hoogli during the Resumption Embroglio, were at Pooree; Mr. A. Mills, who had been collector in 1855, during our former sojourn, and had officially testified to my successes in the Settlement duties, was now

Commissioner of the Province; Mr. Hathorn was the judge, D. Cunliffe the deputy collector, and F. Elphinstone Dalrymple the assistant.

As this last gentleman's name has, from various circumstances been much before the public, I shall not be trespassing on private ground if I say a few words regarding him. A young man, at the time of which I am writing, of remarkable ability, highly educated, with an undoubted talent for poetry, and strikingly handsome, Elphinstone Dalrymple might have lived to be an ornament to the service to which he belonged, and an object of pride and satisfaction to his family and friends, but for one painful event in his early life, which cast its shadow upon his subsequent career.

Devotedly attached to a young lady to whom he had proposed, and by whom he had been accepted, he was suddenly startled by her rejection of the engagement, a fact which was communicated to him by another member of the family!

Unable to obtain any explanation of this unexpected repudiation, the rejected lover, who had given up his whole heart to his betrothed, became almost mad with misery. The disappointment was followed shortly after by dangerous illness; and what was more lamentable, the blow had the effect of intensifying a certain spirit of scepticism which, in common with many young men of modern times, he had unhappily imbibed.

When he came down to Cuttack, shortly after our arrival, he brought with him letters from one of my wife's brothers, mentioning some of the circumstances under which he was suffering, and enlisting our kindly feelings in his behalf.

This naturally led to our seeing him frequently, and our acquaintance gradually ripened into friendship. Sceptical he doubtless was at that time, but he never refused to listen to argument and remonstrance, and I had the intense satisfaction of knowing in later days that my expostulations had been blessed, and that he had become a believer.

A trifling incident, which casually occurred almost immediately after his arrival, gave me, even at that early period, a vivid hope of his conversion.

There was in the old fort of Cuttack a public racket-court, and I found, on my arrival, that certain players used to congregate there on Sundays.

As magistrate I held a sort of *ex-officio* control over the proceedings in the fort, and accordingly issued orders not to admit anyone to play on the Sunday.

Dalrymple went one day, and, in spite of the order, forced his entrance, and, as I heard, knocked about the balls, probably to show his independence, if not his disregard for the sacred day.

I wrote to him, not in anger but in kind persuasion, and he answered in the true spirit of a gentleman, admitting the reasonableness of my arguments, expressing his regret, and promising not again to resist my orders. This little incident always struck me as significantly indicative of right feeling.

Subsequent events not unknown to many then living, but bearing no interest for the public, I will not here dilate upon, but will only say that the night before the unhappy event occurred which formed the great epoch in his life, and when he thought he might not have another day to live, he wrote to me a most touching letter, saying that

whatever others might believe or think, he was anxious that I, at least, should know the real circumstances which had placed him in his critical condition, and the motives by which he had been impelled.

The future career of F. Dalrymple was most unfortunate. He made enemies who united to ruin him; he was too proud to succumb, or court the favour of those who ill-used or persecuted him. That he had laid himself open to censure he himself would not deny, but whatever his faults, his treatment on several occasions was unjust and cruel, and the persistent endeavour in official quarters to ignore his intellectual capacity was simply scandalous.

I cannot resist giving the following lines, written years ago in bitterness of spirit, in reply to a question put to him, not in kindness but in malice.

They show what was the secret of his character—a proud unbending spirit, struggling with heart-felt misery:—

"THE SCEPTIC'S REPLY.

"Ask what I am, and ask in vain.
I am not, at the least, a slave;
Mine own free thought I dare maintain,
The crowd's coarse contumely can brave.
Though seldom named without a sneer,
Though scarce beheld without a frown,
Think not your scorn can change my cheer,
Your muttered hatred bear me down.
True I am sad and strange of mood,
I love not much to be alone,
For then the image will intrude
Of her who once was all my own

The fatal arrow in my side,
I wander o'er life's waste alone,
Nought but unconquerable pride
Chokes in my breast the unuttered groan:
Yet will I bear, while bear I may,
And hide a breaking heart with smiles,
Deceitful as the wintry ray
That gilds at eve the storm-girt isles."

I have rejoiced to see that Colonel Malleson, in his splendid *History of the Mutiny*, has done E. Dalrymple justice, at least as regards courage, intelligence, and spirit:—

"The collector of this place was Mr. Francis Anstruther Elphinstone Dalrymple, one of the ablest men in the Civil Service, but whose prospects had been ruined by long years of persecution on purely private grounds, by those wielding authority in Bengal. But if Dalrymple's worldly fortunes stood low, his courage was as high, and his determination was as unshaken, as they were when, a young civilian, he volunteered for and served in the first China war.

"He had upwards of one hundred thousand pounds in his treasury, and he determined to fight for it. He packed off, then, by water to Calcutta, the solitary missionary of the station and his wife. Then summoning Grant, the judge, Drummond, the magistrate, Brown, the assistant, Harold Holm, a Dane connected with indigo, and well known and much liked in those parts, and a few other Europeans and Eurasians, he posted them, with their rifles and ammunition, in his official court, and, at their head, awaited there the coming of the rebels. Their arrival within twelve miles of the station was announced. Any moment, then, they might appear.

"But amongst Dalrymple and his companions there

was but one thought—to defend the station to the very last—to die rather than abandon the trust confided to them. Fortunately for them, the rebels, when within a short distance of the place, received intelligence of the movements of the British seamen previously referred to; instead, then, of marching on Denajpur, they hurried off to Purnia, there to fall into the clutches of Yule. Dalrymple and his companions were not attacked. Not less, however, did they deserve for their splendid resolution the praise and the credit which were never officially awarded to them!"

In a foot note to this passage, Colonel Malleson adds the following statement:—

"Mr. F. A. Elphinstone-Dalrymple accompanied a party of soldiers sent during that war from the *Rustomjee* transport to attack a battery. As there appeared some chance that the party would arrive late, Dalrymple persuaded the mate to beach the boat at once in the centre of the battery, thus taking the lead of the whole force. He himself was the first man in the battery. At Chusan he accompanied the 55th Regiment in the storm of the steep hill and the intrenched camp. At Shanghai he was on the deck of H.M.S. *Nemesis*, with Captain Hall, now an admiral, better known as Nemesis Hall, fighting the batteries, and subsequently at the taking of Ningpo. He carried Sir Harry Pottinger's despatches to Lord Auckland."

But now that I have brought my readers for the third time to Cuttack and Pooree, and as the latter place was the scene of the one noticeable incident during our last residence in the district of Orissa, I must give the reader some more tangible idea of the place.

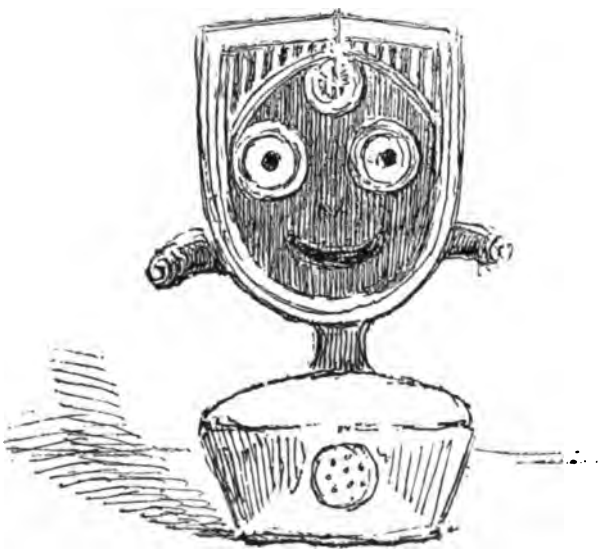
Pooree is situated on the western coast of India, some

miles from the Bay of Bengal, and is by land fifty miles from Cuttack. It is the retreat to which invalids and exhausted officers flee in the hot season, if only for a week or fortnight, to escape the heat of Cuttack, and enjoy the luxury of a fresh sea-breeze.

Under the name of "Pooree" it is only partially known, but as the city of Juganath it has a world-wide notoriety.

Few of my readers, I imagine, are unacquainted with the name of the mighty "Juganath," but as some of them may like to have a more intimate acquaintance with him, I will offer a brief description of the being who commands the reverential worship of millions among the Hindoos.

To impress my readers with the fitting measure of reverence for so awful a being, I will at once present



THE LORD OF THE WORLD.

them with his portrait, as, I doubt not, the sweet smile, intelligent expression, and graceful attitude of this all-powerful deity, will exercise unusual interest.

But I will now give a brief notice of his birth, generation, and attributes.

First of all I must tell the gentle reader that "Juganath" is not the *real* or actual name of the deity, but an attributive appellation signifying "Lord of the Universe"; essentially he is "Krishna," the young man of the Hindu mythology; and Krishna, again, is an incarnation of the mighty deity "Vishnu."

Krishna, in his own separate character, was a very disreputable young man; in his childhood he became notorious for "running away with the clothes of a lot of milkmaids, called 'Gopees,' while they were bathing," and enjoying the embarrassment of the undressed damsels from the top of a tree; when older, he was an unmitigated flirt, always amusing himself with "fast Gopees."

He is usually represented in a *degagée* attitude, with one leg carelessly bent over the other, playing a flute. I bought many specimens of this divine roué, both as a

child and young man, when in India, and they are now in the South Kensington Museum with the rest of my large collection, which, to my great disappointment, *res angusta domi* induced me to sell. The figure of him as a child is seen in the sketch.

The circumstances under which Vishnu became "Juganath" are peculiar. While in his incarnation as *Krishna* he was one day accidentally shot! His bones were collected and preserved in a box. Some pious king having heard of the accident, and being in confidential communication with Vishnu himself, was directed by that deity to form an image, and deposit the bones of the deceased Krishna in the stomach. The work was committed to the architect of the gods, "Vishnu Kurma," but while the sacred fabrication was in progress, some inconsiderate mortal, supposed to be the impatient king himself, interrupted the holy task, and the offended architect knocked off his work, and left the image without hands and feet.

The architect, however, being subsequently conciliated, gave celebrity to the image—handless and footless as it was. All the gods were present; the ugly little idol was set up in form; Brumha himself acted as high priest, gave eyes and soul to the god, and he was called "Juganath."

Since that memorable period, a new image is made every three years, and the original bones of Krishna are removed from the old and deposited in the new figure by a Brahmin, who religiously closes, or pretends to close, his eyes during the awful transit.

Such is the origin of the god who is in fact a wooden Vishnu "Krishna redivivus."

It is said that the Rajah of Burdwan once bribed the Brahmin in charge to show him the bones, saw them, paid two lacs of rupees, and died six months afterwards!

Once every year the great festival of the Ruth Jatra takes place. The "ruth," a lofty car, supported on sixteen wheels, with four wooden horses in front, is brought out, and drawn by 20,000 or 30,000 fanatic devotees.

The great temple is built of stone, and is surrounded by a high wall; a grand monolith, of elegant form, is in the court-yard, which has four gateways. I never saw the interior; the fact is, we were only at Pooree in the hot season, and for short periods; the seaside was deliciously cool, the town in which the temple was situated was distressingly hot, odorous, and stuffy.

One sketch I did of the temple, and another of a pair of pilgrims on their way to the gates of Heaven, and a pair taking their ease, besmeared with ashes.

Within the last two years the papers have told us this great statue is in danger of total demolition, the walls having been undermined by the banyan-tree which grows behind it.

And this very year, by a curious coincidence of ill-fortune, the Rajah of Pooree has been convicted of murder, and sentenced to imprisonment for life.

Hindoo sanctity is thus at a sad discount.

The following is an extract from Dr. Hunter's celebrated statistical work:—

"Another place visited by all pilgrims is the Swargadwara, the Gate of Heaven. The devotee threads his way through the deep-sunk narrow alleys of the town, with their thatched huts of wattle and mud, gaily painted red and yellow gods, till he reaches the shore.

"There, on the south of the city, he comes on a region of sand-hills bordered by temples and tombs behind, and with the surf-beaten beach in front. No distinct boundaries mark the limits of the Gate of Heaven. It runs about a quarter of a mile along the coast, or 'as much as may be occupied by a thousand crows.' In the background the lofty tower of Jaganath rises from the heart of the city; and in the intervening space little monasteries cluster, each in its own hollow between the sandy hills.

"Sometimes an outlying rood or two of land is reclaimed, with infinite labour, from the sandy slopes, and fenced in by a curious wall made of the red earth pots in which the holy food is served out to the pilgrims. The sacred rice can only be placed in a new vessel, and every evening thousands of the unbroken pots are at the disposal of anyone in want of such slender building materials.

"Here the pilgrims bathe at the great festival, as many as 40,000 rush together into the surf, and every evening silent groups may be seen purifying themselves under the slanting rays of the sun.

"It is a spot sanctified by the funeral rites of generations.

"The low castes who bury their dead dig a hasty hole

in the sand, and the hillocks are covered with bones and skulls, which have been washed bare by the tropical rains, or dug up by the jackals.

"Every evening funeral pyres are lighted here, for the incremation of the bodies of the more respectable Hindus who have died in the town."

The exquisite delight of a sudden transition from Cuttack to Pooree passes all description. You get into your palankeen stifled with heat, baked in perspiration, and half-dead with exhausted powers; for some hours you lie in solitary wretchedness in your travelling-box, the climatic heat being intensified by the glare and smell of the Mussalchee's torch. Towards morning you may fall into a dreamy half-conscious doze, and as you enter the town and approach the great temple of "Juganath," are perhaps dimly susceptible of an occasional puff of cooler air. A few minutes afterwards, as you leave the streets of the town and enter upon the open grounds which skirt the sands—ecstasy of ecstasies! you can scarcely credit the change; a delicious, clear, and invigorating breeze meets your recovering senses. Every minute it becomes stronger, and in a few more paces you find yourself in full sight of the glorious ocean, with its blue expanse and sounding surf. "Old things have passed away!" You are another man, or woman, as the case may be.

The sea is bounded by a narrow line of sand, above which are slight mounds partially covered with sparse vegetation, and just behind these again are the bungalows of the residents. Not a tree is to be seen, not a vestige of a garden or shrub is visible or attainable; the bungalows are merely large cottages with rooms and

appurtenances of ordinary comfort. There is an entire absence of grace and beauty; but you are cool, you can move about without the everlasting punkah; you are no longer pestered with mosquitos, your energies are restored.

Although Pooree is fifty miles from Cuttack, there seemed to be even in the minds of the higher authorities a general readiness to shut their eyes when the several functionaries availed themselves for short intervals of this salubrious change, and each officer in turn contrived to make one or more quiet excursions during the hot season, returning refreshed by the change, invigorated by the breeze, and internally strengthened by picked oysters obtained from the great Chilka lake, which is situated within the Pooree district.

We ourselves during our former residence always managed to secure a retreat at Pooree during the hot weather; my wife and children remaining for some time, while I went to and fro with a becoming regard to my official duties.

I must here relate the one rather sensational incident which occurred during our last visit to this marine retreat.

My wife and children had been for some days at Pooree for change of air, and I was to join them at the end of the week.

Before the day for my departure arrived, however, a furious gale set in, and after some hours of insatiate violence it settled into a fierce cyclone, which was raging at its highest pitch on the evening when I was to start in a palankeen for Pooree.

The bearers were most reluctant to undertake the trip,

which they vehemently represented as dangerous; but I felt that my wife would be anxious at my non-appearance, so I overcame their scruples, and off we started half an hour before nightfall. Never shall I forget that short trip—short, for though I had fifty miles to go, we had not accomplished five when it was found impossible to proceed. The bearers could no longer keep their legs; the mussal (torch) went out every five minutes, branches of trees were falling by the road-side, we were in momentary danger. With great difficulty they managed to place the palankeen under a shed, of which the roof was blown clean away shortly after, but which still afforded some shelter from the fury of the wind. We passed the night in inexpressible discomfort, the poor bearers huddling together on the lee-side of my palankeen, the wind never ceasing, and the sound of crashing branches constantly reverberating in our ears,

Time, however, never stops in its career; the night passed and daylight found us alive and uninjured. The gale had somewhat abated, and we recommenced our journey.

Such a scene as the road presented I could not have conceived, and shall never forget. Large trees had been blown down, and many remained stretched across the road; dead monkeys and dead crows were here and there visible among them. It was with the greatest difficulty that the bearers in some parts made any progress at all, and it was many hours before we reached our destination.

And when we did emerge from the town and entered on the sandy plain, what was the spectacle which presented itself?

The first object close to us was a dead horse, which I recognised as belonging to one of the residents, carried by a number of men, and when, a few minutes afterwards, we looked forward to the place where all the bungalows were situated, scarcely a house was visible, two or three only were standing, the rest lying flat as pancakes. Providentially several were more strongly built than the others; in one of these my wife and all the other ladies of the station were assembled. My wife had been compelled to leave the house in which she was staying (a bungalow which I had lately purchased) by the cracking of the walls; she had just time to get into her palankeen and escape to the house in which I found her, when her bungalow subsided. It was, as she described it, with the greatest difficulty that sixteen men could stagger under the weight of herself and children, who were all huddled into the palankeen together.

Even then the wind was so marvellously sharp that it actually split one of the panels of the palankeen during the few yards it had to travel.

Altogether the escape from serious injury had been very narrow, and the sight of the sandy tract with the prostrate houses was not very enlivening.

The violent surf, too, played its part in the uproar of the elements, and forcibly reminded us of our perilous passage three years before, which I described in my eighth chapter.

But the residents of Pooree were not the only sufferers from the awful cyclone of that night. At Piplis, a short distance from the station, Lieutenant Thuillier, then in charge of the Survey Department, was stationed with the entire party of assistants, with their instruments,

and other paraphernalia, exposed to imminent danger throughout the night from the falling of the large trees under which they were encamped. Lieutenant Thuillier's family were at Pooree, and when he hastened into the station in some alarm on the following morning, he had the satisfaction of seeing the bungalow which he had purchased only a week before blown to the ground by the pitiless wind, forming a pair with mine.

The mention of Lieutenant Thuillier as a fellow-sufferer in this rough game of Æolus, naturally suggests a subject of no little interest, viz. the Revenue Survey, a most important work, the superintendence of which was carried on by Lieutenant (now Sir Henry) Thuillier, in Balasore and Central Cuttack, districts of Orissa, and subsequently in Cachar and Sylhet. Having achieved no small reputation in the successful discharge of these duties, he was in 1847 appointed as Deputy Surveyor-General and Superintendent of all the Revenue Surveys in the Bengal Presidency. In 1861 he succeeded Major-General Sir Andrew Waugh, as Surveyor-General of India, which important post he held until 1878, when he retired after a departmental service of forty-one years. In 1872 he was decorated with the C.S.I., and received the honour of knighthood from Her Majesty in 1879, when he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-General in the Royal Artillery.

The result of the Revenue Survey operations in which this officer was concerned, was the settlement of the Land Revenue of this country, and the enhancement of the revenue payable to the Government during his administration of his large and wide-spread department. The whole of Bengal, Behar, Orissa, the North-West

Provinces, and the Punjab, were brought under exact specification of the demand in the Land Revenue, or on the proportion of land to revenue in the perpetually settled provinces, where of course no resettlement could take place.

Previous to this survey no precise information existed as to the existence of the innumerable number of small estates liable for Government revenue; and in the Civil Courts purchasers of estates could not identify or make sure of the position of the land they might have paid for.

The difference of the amount paid to Government for the land revenue now and formerly, sufficiently attests the value of the survey, and could the old Perpetual Settlement made by Cornwallis in 1793 be resumed, the result of the admirable labours of the Survey Department might effectually relieve the Financial Budget of India from all anxiety.

In addition to the Revenue Survey carried on in British districts, on the largest scale, the late Surveyor-General was instrumental in effecting very extensive topographical surveys of the native states, on a smaller scale, for the purpose of a general or military map of all India. Both British and native states amply testify to what has been produced during the last thirty years by one of the most indefatigable and hard-working departments that ever served a government, the officers and lieutenants of which have long been held prominent for their superior intelligence and indomitable industry.

A curious incident occurred during this our last residence at Cuttack, which deserves notice.

When first we went there, and for several years

afterwards, there was no clergyman of the Church of England, and the service was performed by the judge or magistrate. In the absence, however, of regular clerical superintendence, many of the resident Christians, the clerks, writers, and others, usually attended the service of the Baptist missionary—Mr. Lacy—a most excellent man, who had done much good, and was very much respected.

A curious result, however, of this irregular communion on one occasion presented itself.

Those who had been in the habit of attending the Baptist Chapel, and taking part in its service, were naturally led to adopt the missionary's teaching on the subject of baptism, and on one occasion, when a chaplain paid an official visit to the station, it came to his knowledge that one of the arguments used to attract converts to their sect was, that while baptism, or "dipping" as the word signifies, was the ceremony indicated and exercised by the Primitive Christians, it was forbidden by the English Church. On hearing this, the chaplain, who was a man of determination and ingenuity, resolved to give a public and practical proof of the inaccuracy of this statement.

Several children were to be baptised on the Sunday after his arrival. He preached an excellent sermon on the subject, pointing out the absence of all prohibition against immersion, and explaining that the custom of sprinkling had been introduced as a matter of expediency, owing to the coldness of climate and the European costume.

But his practical illustration was to come. It was observed with some surprise, during the service, that the temporary font constructed for the ceremony was a tub, and that, to all appearance, full of water.

When the service was over, several children were prepared, and the first taken up was the little daughter of a civilian.

The baby was in the mother's arms, who handed it to the clergyman; to her alarm and dismay, he took it in his arms and, plunging it into the tub, drew it deliberately through the water.

Mamma, I am sorry to say, was not only alarmed but offended. The same process, however, was followed with the other children, though not without silent indications of remonstrance.

The service created a sensation; but the eyes of the semi-Baptists were at once opened, and the legitimacy of baptismal immersion was never again subjected to question.

Not long after these events, my wife was attacked by severe and protracted fever, which lasted for several months, and spread a gloom over the whole station. Through God's mercy her life was spared, and, after a second visit to Pooree, when she became a little stronger, we left our house in the town, and once again occupied the pleasant mansion at Chowleagunge, on the skirt of the race-course, the same house in which in 1835 we had passed so many pleasant days with our friends the Reptons, and in which we were visited by Mr. Tyler. Colonel and Mrs. Howard, with whom we had formed an intimate friendship, came with us, and Mrs. Howard was a valuable coadjutor in nursing my wife, who was still weak from the effect of her late fever. It was during her gradual recovery from this illness that the ever-watchful crows took advantage of her helplessness, entered the room where she was lying on her couch, and

helped themselves to a portion of her breakfast, an incident which I mentioned in Chapter IV., and of which I here give a sketch.

On the 12th of October, 1840, our little daughter was born—a lovely child, almost too beautiful to live—and who died a year afterwards at the Cape of Good Hope, when a cast was taken of her, under strangely affecting circumstances, which, if I ever publish my eighteen months at the Cape, I shall not fail to relate.

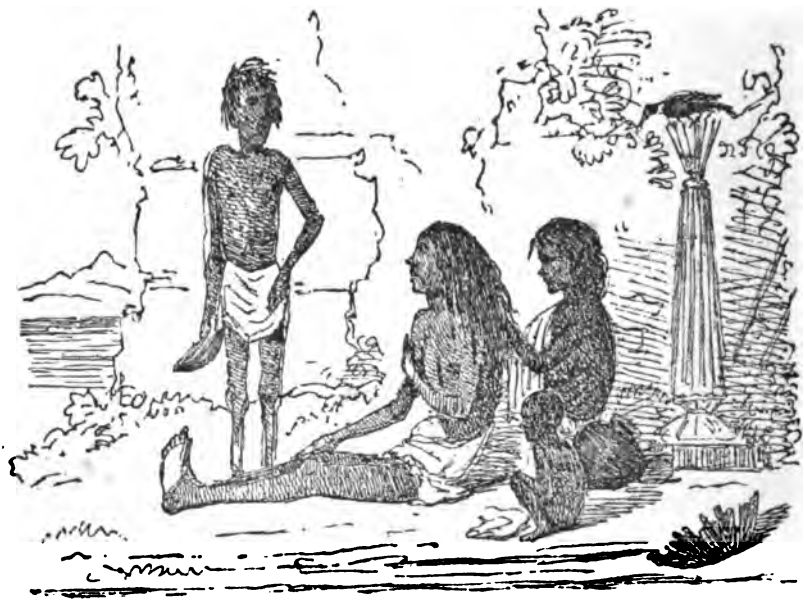
But although my wife had partially regained her health, complete and immediate change was considered necessary; and as the long and terrible anxiety which her illness had caused in my mind had told on my health also, I was able to obtain a medical certificate, and leave to visit the Cape of Good Hope for two years.

Once more, then—and for the third time—we had to

find our way to Calcutta, where we remained for several weeks, making preparations for our departure. The change to Calcutta aided in the restoration of my wife's health, and before we actually started in the good ship *Owen Glendower*, under the command of Captain Toller, she was much improved.

Our friends Colonel and Mrs. Howard were our fellow-passengers. We engaged a rather superior young English servant to take charge of our children, then five in number, including the baby, and also took two natives—a cook and a durzee (tailor)—who, we were told, would prove very useful at the Cape.

After a pleasant and uneventful passage, during which my wife's health was much improved, our ship anchored at Table Bay, and deposited us, children, native servants, and baggage, in safety. New objects, a fresher climate,



AMUSEMENT.—AFTER DINNER.

diversified scenery, and population in clothes, were before us.

But, as I have observed, the details of our sojourn will form the subject of a separate narrative, which I shall hope, ere long, to be able to publish with copious illustrations.

Before I leave Cuttack I give one or two sketches—one representing an old lady and her companion, with fruit, in tolerably comfortable condition.

The other a specimen of an unfortunate family, during a season of scarcity, *after dinner*.

The third shows a group under a banyan-tree.

CHAPTER XVII.

RETURN TO INDIA.

Return from Cape of Good Hope.—Arrival in Calcutta.—Appointment as Acting Judge of Backergunge.—Return to Calcutta.—Made First Magistrate of Howrah.—Formation of Body-Guard.—Adventure with Dacoits.—Strange Incompetency of Appellate Court.—Remonstrance to the Sudder Courts.—Its Result.—Sketches from the Bench.

On our return from the Cape of Good Hope at the latter end of 1842, we went at once to rooms at Wilson's Hotel, where, the first night of our arrival, we experienced in the dead of night the unpleasant sensation of an earthquake—not the only one I had felt in India. As we were sleeping at the top of the unusually high house, the sensation was not pleasant, and there was a great desertion of beds by the pale-faced occupants, but no catastrophe.

My wife's health was completely restored, and my only anxiety was to obtain a good appointment. Fortunately the judgeship of Backergunge became vacant for three months, and our kind friend Wilberforce Bird,

who was at that time, in the absence of Lord Ellenborough, enjoying the dignity of Deputy Governor of Bengal, offered the berth to me. The appointment was not a very desirable one, but it served well as a stop-gap, and as I had never held a judgeship before, and as Mr. Loughnan, the permanent incumbent, kindly offered us the use of his house and furniture during his absence, I gladly accepted Mr. Bird's offer, and made preparations for the trip.

Backergunge is a genuine Bengal swamp, and the best mode of reaching it is by water through the Sunderbunds, a somewhat picturesque but not particularly pleasant trip. As, however, we were alone, having left all our infantine incumbrances in England, we had but little to provide, and reached our destination without event or accident.

The daily routine of judicial functions at a place like Backergunge was about as monotonous and uninteresting as can well be imagined; the only incident or fact at all out of the ordinary course of affairs was that the collector, Mr. S——, had married a native lady, pleasant, pretty, and amiable. Mrs. S—— freely associated with English ladies and gentlemen, but would not suffer herself to be interviewed by any strange native servants of the masculine gender. Two or three lads, however, who had been with her from boyhood, were allowed to wait at dinner; all strange servants were refused admittance, and if by chance any were in the house and heard the rattle of her anklets or bangles, they had to rush behind doors or pillars to conceal themselves. They had a charming little boy called Richard, who inherited his mother's beauty, and who fell in love with my wife,

whom he christened "Ichard ka mem," or Richard's lady.

On the expiration of the three months we returned to Calcutta, Mr. S —— having kindly lent us for the trip his beautiful pinnace, which his amiable wife furnished with all manner of delicacies for our journey. We parted with mutual regret, and comfortably accomplished our return to the "city of palaces."

I had then again to approach the Deputy Governor as a candidate for employment. No vacancy was available, however, but a fortunate accident enabled Mr. Bird to provide a berth for me.

Exactly opposite to Calcutta, on the other side of the river Hoogli, lies Howrah, a populous town containing many buildings, and a large European population. During the last few years it has been connected with Calcutta by a large pontoon bridge, and contains an important railway station. Up to the year I am writing of, there had never been a separate English magistrate in the district, and for some time past advantage had been taken of this defect, especially by Jack Tar, who frequently resorted to the place for the more effective prosecution of a spree.

Just at the time that I appeared as candidate for office on my return from Backergunge, it had been resolved that a magistracy should be organised, and Mr. Bird, kindly accelerating the arrangements in my behalf, appointed me as first magistrate.

It was an important and arduous office, and there were inveterate misrule and disorganisation to contend with.

But these very facts excited interest, and I set en-

thusiastically to work to ensure the safety of the residents, the peace of the district, and the repression of crime.

For this purpose I took a house in the centre of the town, and obtained special permission to organise, in addition to the usual police, a separate and "select body" consisting of eight burkandazes (policemen), and a jemadar, or head-man, to be always close at hand and prepared for action. These men I located in my grounds, with sheds for their meals and beds, and had two always awake and on the alert.

By the rapid and unsuspected action of this body, composed of picked and stalwart men, all unruly enterprises, street rows, and nautical larks were gradually checked, and order was established.

One sensational adventure which occurred shortly after my appointment is worthy of special narration.

One morning when I was sitting in my study a chuprassie came in and said there was a native at the door, he believed a Brahmin, who was anxious to see me; he had asked him what he wished to say, but the man said he could only tell the "sahib" (gentleman) himself. I immediately ordered the man to be brought in, and asked him what he had come for.

He looked stealthily round, but did not say a word until the chuprassee left the room; he then came close to my table and commenced his story in an under-tone and with great energy of expression and manner.

His tale was this:—He was a Brahmin, and belonged to a gang of "dacoits" (professional robbers). His party had planned a burglary at the house of a rich goldsmith some eight miles from the town. After all the arrangements were made, however, a prospective

partition of the expected booty was discussed, and his associates had shown great unfairness towards him and great ingratitude; that he was accordingly indignant at this conduct, especially as he was the only Brahmin among them, and was entitled on that account, as *facile princeps* among the scoundrels, to special respect; that he had out of revenge resolved to give me as magistrate information of the intended attack, so that I might send out my police secretly and catch the robbers in *flagrante delicto*.

I was not a little astonished at this cool confession, unflinchingly made to a magistrate, and at first felt inclined to suspect the truth of the tale; but the fellow's manner was so impressive and earnest, and his answers, on cross-examination, so consistent and reasonable, that I could not withhold credence.

He told me the robbery was in the first instance to be merely a burglary while the goldsmith and his family were asleep; but that the gang, which was numerous, would be armed with pointed stakes and other weapons, and in event of resistance the attack was to be carried out like a dacoity, by open force.

On the completion of his tale I told him that I believed, and that I myself would go to the spot and arrest the robbers. He grinned with delight on hearing this, and I was confirmed in my belief.

I then ascertained the exact date, hour, and place at which the burglary was to be effected. His suggestion was that at twilight I should ride three or four miles across country to a particular spot indicated, where a guide should meet me and take me on foot within a short distance of the robbers' rendezvous,

where he would come and consult on the plan to be adopted.

I consented to this, took down his name in writing, and promised to carry out the scheme.

As it was obviously necessary to have a strong body of police with me in case of a scrimmage, I immediately took the jemadar of my body-guard into confidence: we agreed to take the whole of my personal guard, and I left him to exercise his discretion in selecting eight or ten more from the general body, in whom he felt he could confide both for courage and secrecy.

On the appointed evening I mounted my beloved "Muscadel," a beautiful black horse which I had brought with me from the Cape, and dressing myself in demi-native costume, with a turban on my head and large pyejamahs on my nether man, I cantered over the intervening miles, and alighted at the spot where the guide was to meet me. As I approached, the fellow (evidently a chokeydar) stepped from the hedge, and I saw by his manner and action that he was the appointed guide. I accordingly dismounted, sent my horse away, and placed myself under the direction of the unknown conductor. After a long and fatiguing trudge for several miles over ploughed and unploughed fields, we at last arrived at the appointed place of meeting. It was a low shed, on the outskirts of a village, but at some distance from the other houses. Here I found my jemadar and policemen assembled round a small fire which they had lighted on the ground, where they were whispering and in consultation. They rose to salaam in due form; all others were there, but—where was the Brahmin?

For some minutes we remained in silence, and horrible

thoughts of a "sell" and a "take in" crowded to my mind. The jemadar said not a word, and his silence confirmed my suspicions. The dilemma was sickening, and I was just making up my mind to order an ignominious retreat, when suddenly, and as if by magic, a figure, black as night and shining like patent leather, even in the dull light, glided in among us. It was the "ipsissimus" Brahmin, but disguised as one of the wicked; his light brown skin covered with pitch-black paint, and his body oiled to render capture difficult.

Directly he saw me he glided up, and in hurried words said:

"The fools, the madmen; they have just sat down to a carousal with their pipes and their toddy, and won't move, I feel sure, for hours. I have slipped away unobserved, but cannot stay a moment. Your guide will show you the house; make your own arrangements; they will be nearly twenty men; keep your police-walas hidden and you may catch them. I will try and give you notice just before they come."

With these words, spoken in an agitated whisper, he disappeared like a snake in the grass, and we were left to our devices. I called the guide, and he at once led us to the house. It was a large building, surrounded by a high mud wall, which enclosed a courtyard and the separate dwelling-places of the family *more Indico*.

On examining the place I found that there was low jungle on three sides, quite sufficient to afford cover and concealment to my men; but alas! the fourth corner was completely exposed, and as this was next to the road in which the robbers would approach the house, it was clear that some at least would escape. I placed five or

six of the burkandazes in the bushes at the three corners, telling them to lie *perdu* until the robbers came, keeping, however, their senses alive; a larger number, and those picked men, I placed at the corner next the wall, which the guide told us was the one to be dug through, strictly enjoining them to be still till they heard me cough, when they were to jump up as silently as possible, rush upon the gang, and each man seize his victim, while the others, directly they heard the row, were to rush round from their respective corners, and intercept any who might run in that direction.

Having made these arrangements, I and my jemadar went to a little distance to examine the surroundings of the house. All was still and dark, and after agreeing that when the robbers came we should both conceal ourselves behind a large tree which stood close to the corner where my picked detachment lay concealed, and that I should give the signal from thence, we sat down on the banks of a lane some hundred yards from the devoted house, and there we remained for several hours. Somnus was just asserting his divine rights, and I was fast losing my senses, when we suddenly heard a shout and the rattle of the well-known chokeydar's stick at the top of the lane in which we were seated. Another call, and another thud of the stick. There was no mistake, it was the chokeydar (village watchman) on his rounds, and he was, as is their custom, benevolently warning any thieves or robbers of his approach lest they should be inconveniently discovered. What was to be done? I cannot at this distance of time repress a smile when I remember that instead of hailing the guard of the night, as we should in England, as a coadjutor in

our scheme, I was convinced that so daring a robbery could never have been contemplated or brought to maturity without the consent and probably the concurrence of the Mofussil "bobby," and that if he caught sight of us, all hope of success would vanish.

I at once made up my mind, and told the jemadar to go quietly to the opposite bank of the narrow lane where we were sitting, to remain perfectly still and hidden behind the brushwood, but to take off his "kumurbund" or waist band, and keep it ready; that the moment the chokeydar came close to us, we would both seize him, when the jemadar was at once to gag him with the "kumurbund" to prevent his crying out, and then keep him prisoner. All turned out as we wished; the man came close to us, and just as he banged his stick down and was about to utter one of his official roars we seized him, and his ejaculation ended in helpless murmurs.

The astonishment and horror depicted in his face (for the waning moon had now risen) when I said "I am the magistrate" was inexpressibly ludicrous.

Very shortly after this episode we returned to the house, and as we were standing by our tree and seeing that our ambuscade was in due keeping, the serpentine black figure once more stood before us, and whispering softly, "They are coming; look out!"—disappeared.

We then took our places behind the big tree and watched. After some minutes we heard a confused noise at a distance. The sounds came nearer, and then in full view of us came up the gang with baskets and spears and clubs, evidently in a merry mood, and doubtless without fear of failure. After a few minutes'

confabulation a party was told off to work; some placed themselves at the unguarded corner, apparently to see if anyone approached; others squatted down, prepared to take their turn, while one took an iron rod, the professional tool of the burglar, called (sind-kathee), and commenced vigorously digging at the high wall in a particular spot; two or three others with baskets received the loose bricks, and carried them some yards off. While this was going on I felt an uncontrollable desire to scan their operations more closely, and seized the opportunity, while all were busily engaged, to move rapidly from the tree a few steps and get to the wall itself. This was managed without detection, and I was near enough, by peeping round the corner, to see the rascals' countenances and occasionally hear their conversation. Not wishing to interrupt the interesting work until they were in the midst of it, and one or two perhaps half through the wall, I delayed giving the signal, and was still intently watching, when suddenly one of the policemen in ambush behind me, whether intentionally, from accident or nervousness, uttered a sound something like a cough. Up they jumped at the sound, believing it the signal; but instead of rushing quietly on the gang as I had enjoined, they screamed and shouted, "Mar! mar!" (strike, strike). One man tumbled head over heels, another fired a pistol, and before they could reach one of the robbers, the whole had escaped, all but one man, the leader, who was in the act of digging the wall!

The moment I heard my guard on the move, I myself darted from the corner where I had been watching, and rushed at the digger, who seemed too scared or too

encumbered to move. Seizing him by the throat, I said, "You scoundrel, I am the magistrate!"

As I said these words the man dropped on his knees, and his expression of horror baffles all description.

But this was but a poor result of our elaborate plans, and so thought our blackened Brahmin, for he appeared among us at the moment wringing his hands and exclaiming, "They are all fled; I shall be ruined. All escaped! What have you done?" But immediately afterwards he suddenly exclaimed, "Come along with me, we will catch some of them yet; come on, follow me." We obeyed and followed him to two or three houses, where we found several fellows who had evidently been with the gang, and especially one man, who, stretched on the ground, was snoring as if in profound slumber, but on being kicked and turned over on his side exhibited palpable signs of newly-turned earth on his hands, while his short breathing showed he had only just had a hard run; another was found with a sind-kathee covered with earth concealed on his person.

These men we secured, and between three and four in the morning I reached my home, to the no little relief of my wife, who had been anxiously expecting me for hours.

The next day I tried the prisoners whom I had arrested, and sentenced them to different terms of imprisonment.

The sequel of this adventure, like that in the case of the murderer at Cuttack, is perhaps the most curious part of the tale, and gives further insight into the occasional eccentricities of the judicial courts in India.

Shortly after this event I was appointed to officiate as Judge of Midnapore, during the absence of Henry

Raikes, the permanent incumbent, and thought nothing more of the blackened Brahmin and his baffled gang.

But one day I received a letter from my successor at Howrah, Mr. George Cockburn, saying that as he supposed I should be interested in the case in which I had taken so much personal trouble, he wrote to tell me that the prisoners, having secured the service of an English attorney, had every one of them been acquitted on appeal by the judge, including even the man whom I had seized with my own hand in the act of digging through the wall!

I was certainly interested, and I may say indignant at so gross a miscarriage of justice, and at once reported the circumstances to the Sudder Court.

To the credit of that high authority the judge received a severe wigging, a copy of which was sent officially to me.

From a private source I heard that his suspension from office had been seriously discussed. I refrain from mentioning his name; but to give the reader some idea of the wisdom and acumen which sometimes appertained in those days to judicial officers, I hereby quote several paragraphs of the letter which I addressed to the Sudder Court on the subject, representing the extraordinary grounds on which he had thought fit to acquit the prisoners:—

Para. 19. "I yesterday received from Mr. Cockburn, with a demi-official note, a copy of the proceedings of the officiating Sessions Judge of the 24 Pergunahs acquitting the prisoners.

Para. 20. "The grounds of the acquittal are as follow:—

"1st. That it is not probable that the burglary *should have taken place at all*, because, first, the burglars would not have been so

careless as to have attacked the house when the Magistrate and the Nazir and a number of people were assembled. 2ndly. The house is by the side of a road."

My comments to the Sudder Court on these strange reasons, which to this day appear to me to be more like the dicta of a lunatic than of a man in his right mind, were these :—

"If it is necessary to meet these speculations I would observe that the Sessions Judge, in vindicating the wisdom of the robbers, has ascribed rather an undue portion of folly to me. If our presence was any check, we must have been visible; if invisible, it would be no check, *de non apparentibus et de non existentibus eadem est ratio.*'

"On the second point I can only say it certainly is the first time I have ever heard that a pathway is a security against theft. I fear the Calcutta house-keepers have not found it so."

I then represented that the deliberate and recorded asseverations of a fact which took place under the direct cognizance of my senses had been set aside and discredited on grounds which, to use the mildest term, were irrational and frivolous.

"The word of a convicted thief, arrested by me in the commission of a felony and self-condemned by his voluntary confession, has been preferred to that of an English gentleman and a public officer of, I hope, unblemished character.

"A public functionary appointed by Government to guard the persons and properties of a numerous community from the depredations of violence and crime, has been held up to that community as a fabricator of false statements, whose word is not of so much value as that of the lowest rogue among them.

"A most dangerous precedent has been established which cannot fail to dishearten the well-disposed, and to give fresh impetus to

the perpetration of outrages in a district already overrun with crime, and a gang of notorious thieves have been let loose on the community to vaunt their victory over the arm of justice.

"I have the honour to be,

(Signed) "W. TAYLER,
"Late Official Magistrate Howrah.

"Zillah, Midnapore,
"The 9th of August, 1843."

The result of the correspondence was a very satisfactory letter from the Sudder Court, expressing strong displeasure at the proceedings of the judge—a lame and impotent conclusion!

The above correspondence took place after I had left Howrah; since those days a railway station has been built at Howrah, and a bridge communicating with Calcutta, and it has become a very important town. It is to be hoped that the dacoits have been more logically dealt with than they were in 1843.

I give here a few figures whom I drew irreverently from the magisterial bench while before me on trial in different cases. The sketches were taken under the shelter of the desk, unbeknown altogether to the sitters.

Had the fact become known it would doubtless have been quoted on the occasion of a sensational struggle which occurred shortly after this, as a proof that my "love for the fine arts" interfered with my official duties. The details of this amusing though somewhat discreditable controversy will be related at length in a future chapter.

I can only hope, when at this distance of time I recal

ABDUCTION.

DEFENDANTS. HUSBAND. WIFE.

April 29th, 1843.

ARSON.

RAMDHUN (CHRISTIAN)
PLAINTIFF.

WITNESS.

JUGGO BUR, RUGGO BUR,
DEFENDANTS, AND OTHERS.

Howrah, May 3rd, 1848.

the circumstances, that my surreptitious portraits did not seriously interfere with the justice of my sentences, or in any way cause embarrassment to the interesting prisoners.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MIDNAPORE.

Arrival at Midnapore.—Description of District.—Residents.—Illness of Friend's Children.—Doorga Poojah Holidays.—Doorga, alias Kali, the Goddess.—Large Party of Guests.—Festivities.—Tableaux Vivans.—Characters.—T. Holroyd and Tandem.—Buffalo Hunt.—Bear in Shed.—Malet's Folly.—Beercool.—Mrs. Harrison's Illness.—Curiosities of Natural History.—Frog and Snake.—Praying Mantis.—Field of Battle.—Return to Calcutta.

MIDNAPORE is the most southern district of the Division of Burdman, and is bounded on the south by the Bay ofBengal. The three stations, Midnapore, Chittagong, and Burdwan, at that time furnishing a third of the whole revenue of Bengal, were ceded to the "East India Company" as early as 1760, by Mir Kasim, whom we elevated to the Governorship of Bengal in lieu of Meer Jaffier, his father-in-law.

At the time of the decennial settlement in 1789, the two divisions of Zumlook, Mahishadal, and subsequently, in 1836, that of Hijlee, were annexed to it.

The district is well-cultivated, and in some parts picturesque and woody, but, with the exception of Tumlook, contains nothing worthy of special or exceptional notice in a running narrative like this.

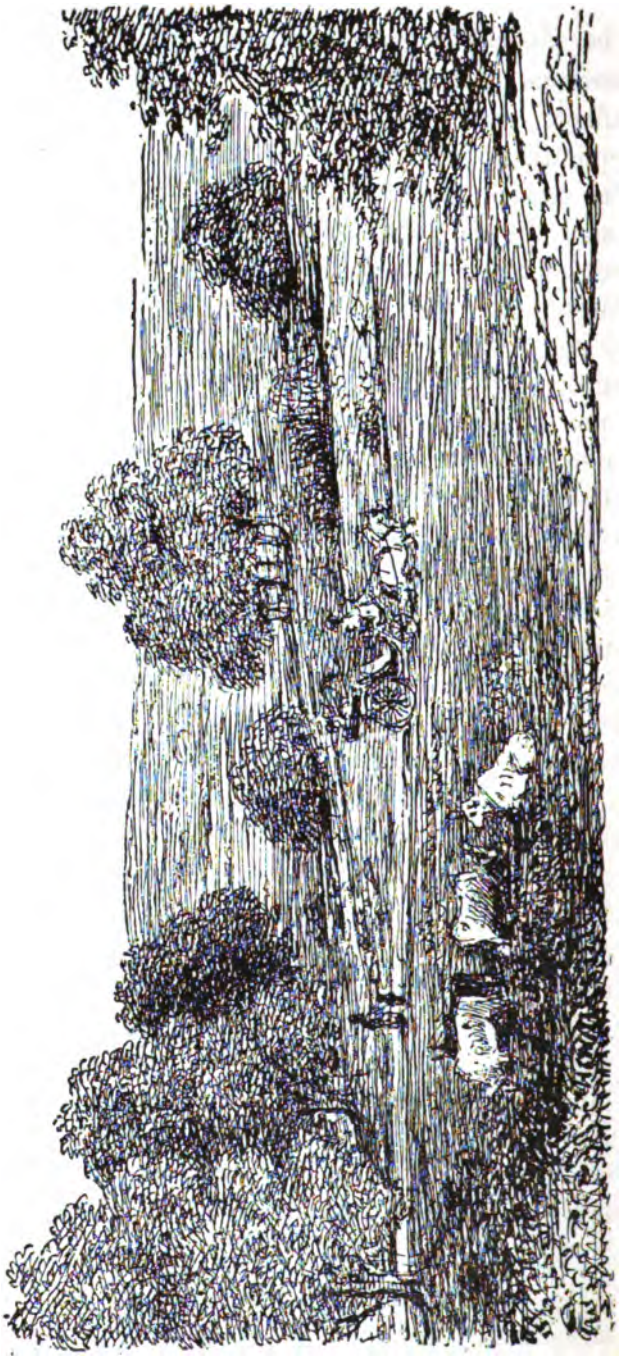
The station itself, which is called Midnapore, is a pleasant place, with good roads covered with red gravel, picturesque trees, and undulating ground.

Many years after our short sojourn there a great canal connecting the station with Ulabaria, on the river Hooghly, sixteen miles from Calcutta, was constructed, and now affords a continuous navigable channel of fifty-three miles in length, almost due east and west.

This noble work was completed in 1873. As I was only at this station for a few months, I had no opportunity of visiting any of the more remarkable or interesting parts of the district, excepting "Gope"—a romantic spot, the favourite resort for pic-nics.

On our first arrival we stayed with Mr. R. P. Harrison, who had married our valued friend Miss Cheek. Mr. Harrison was then Magistrate of Midnapore, and has since passed a long and creditable career, at the close of which he was made Controller-General of Accounts for India, and has since been decorated with the Star of India.

After we had been settled for some time, the children of three of our friends—Mrs. Harrison, Mrs. Bayley, and Mrs. Buckle—were severally taken ill with fever, and my wife's assistance and advice were in requisition for all; eventually, by the advice of the medical officer, all three invalids were brought to our house. Two, on their recovery, returned to their home, but as the Bayleys' child became seriously ill, the parents, on our



invitation, remained with us. Mr. Bayley, now no longer living, was at that time collector of Midnapore, an able officer, who eventually became Judge of the High Court. His father, Mr. Butterworth Bayley, a member of the Court of Directors, and at one time acting as Governor-General, gave our eldest son his writership.

Three young civilians during this period came to the station—Louis Jackson, Mactier, and Charles Horne. The first of these, after a long service in different important posts, became a judge of the Sudder Court, and has just retired, full of honours, as Sir Louis Jackson, decorated with the Order of the Indian Empire. The other two died each at an early age, after a short but creditable term of service.

Our sojourn at Midnapore was brief, quiet, and unsensational. The country is picturesque, the climate healthy, and the distance from Calcutta not so far as to be inconvenient.

The house I had engaged was a remarkably nice one, with two storeys (a thing very unusual in the Mofussil), situated in very extensive grounds dignified by the name of a "park."

The official work was easy, and there was for some time nothing to disturb, amuse, or excite us. When, however, the "Doorga Pooja" holidays arrived, *i.e.* in October, and, the sultry and insalubrious heat of the rains passing gradually away, the clear bracing air gave auspicious warning of the approach of what is called the cold weather, our social condition began to change.

The holiday itself, generally occupying some five or six weeks, is held by our Christian Government in honour of the celebrated goddess Doorga, or "Kali," a

GODDESS KALI.

nice young woman, as black as soot and as ugly as imagination can conceive.

The annexed sketch will give some faint notion of her general appearance and amiable expression. The protrusion of the tongue was originally caused by the lady suddenly discovering on a great occasion when she was trampling on a prostrate body that it was the body of her husband, Shiva.

The following description of this amiable lady, is from Fanny Parks's charming book, a copy of which the talented authoress kindly presented to me :—

"The goddess is represented as a black female with four arms, standing on the breast of Shiva. In one hand she carries a scymitar, in two others the heads of giants, which she holds by the hair, and the fourth hand supports giants' heads.

" She wears two dead bodies for ear-rings, and a necklace of sculls. Her tongue hangs down to her chin. The heads of giants are hung as a girdle round her loins, and her jet-black hair falls to her heels. Having drunk the blood of the giants she slew, her eye-brows are bloody, and the blood is falling in a stream down her breast. Her eyes are red, like those of a drunkard. She stands with one leg on the breast of her husband Shiva, and rests the other on his thigh."

" Men are pointed out amongst *other animals* as a proper sacrifice to Kalee; the blood of a tiger pleases her for 100 years; the blood of a lion, a reindeer, or a man for 1,000 years; by the sacrifice of three men she is pleased for 100,000 years.

" Kalee had a contest with the great Ravuna, which lasted ten years; having conquered him, she became

mad with joy, and her dancing shook the earth to its centre. To restore the peace of the world Shiva, her husband, threw himself amongst the dead bodies at her feet. She continued her dancing and trampled on him. When she discovered her husband, she stood still, horror-struck and ashamed, and threw out her tongue to an uncommon length. By this means Shiva stopped her frantic dancing and saved the universe. When the Hindoo women are shocked or ashamed at anything, they put out their tongues as a mode of expressing their feelings. Nor is this practice confined to the women of the East alone; it is common amongst the lower order of the English."

Not, however, as far as we were concerned, with any idea of commemorating or doing honour to this disagreeable woman, but for our own and friends' satisfaction, we laid ourselves out for a pleasant month's holiday-making.

Our house was large and capacious, so we invited a considerable party of friends, of the lively and sociable sort, to share our conviviality.

Our party consisted of Mrs. James Pattle and her two unmarried daughters, Miss Virginia Pattle, now Countess of Somers, and her younger sister, now Mrs. Dalrymple; another married daughter with her husband Henry Bayley of the Civil Service, whom I have already mentioned; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Prinsep, James Mackenzie, Carington Palmer, Warren Frith, Louis Jackson, R. Cust, and others. Many of these were in our own house, others had rooms elsewhere, but all met in the evening.

As our merry-makings were rather amusing, I took

sketches of them at the time, and as many of the individuals who formed members of our gathering have since achieved notoriety in the great race of intellect, beauty or fame, I will here give a brief idea of some of our doings, especially in the amateur dramatic performances, which were, on one occasion at least, tinged with true comedy.

To this end I will select what I may call our principal tableau, which represented the word "Pygmalion." "Pyg," the first syllable, was admirably rendered by Louis Jackson, who, leading a live pig by a string, sang with great effect a droll and characteristic Irish song.

The next syllable, "May," represented a dance round the May-pole.

But the cream of the fun was reserved for the last syllable, "Lion."

To present this with effect, I planned a menagerie, in which were a lion, a bear, and a large monkey.

This was admirably got up. Louis Jackson was the bear, enveloped in fur, with a sham head, long fur gloves and dangling fingers. He was "Ursa Major" to perfection.

Warren Frith, one of the most extraordinarily agile mortals ever created, made a gallant monkey of the large and dashing kind.

James Mackenzie, with an enormous mane exquisitely made and fitted, and a yellow skin stretched tightly over his body, was Leo ipsissimus, and might have sat or stood for his portrait in a picture of Daniel in the Den.

I was the keeper and showman, and to make the thing more realistic I procured a real monkey of the smaller kind, which I held by a chain.

The stage represented the floor of the theatre; the lion was on all fours between a cage of chairs, and he had a raucous trumpet which, without showing, he was to blow violently when he wished to roar.

The bear and the monkey were left to their own devices, only the *rôle* of the latter was to exhibit his activity unceasingly with his highest jumps.

All was ready; the curtain was drawn up, and the spectators appeared enchanted. The lion uttered loud growls from behind the cage, the bear bounded about, the big monkey chattered, and my little monkey responded with unsuspecting sympathy.

It was a great success, and the applause was vociferous, when suddenly the human monkey rose up perpendicularly with an incredible spring, and not judging his distance carefully, came down in his descent right on the neck of the lion.

The unhappy lion at that moment had just put his trumpet to his mouth intending to produce a sēnsational roar, but the tremendous weight falling upon him at the moment he was blowing, produced the most horrible and startling cry; the offending monkey increased the uproar with a succession of sham shrieks and screams; the bear, catching the infection, roared and growled; and to crown the tumultuous scene, my real little monkey, which was hitherto quietly enjoying the performance, now fell into a fit of agonised terror, jumped up and clung convulsively round my neck, chattering and shaking his chain, and making confusion "worse confounded."

But even this was not all; the noise, the shrieks, the rattle of chains, and the unfeigned horror of the living monkey, were too much for one of the lady spectators;

she lost all command of herself, got up, shut her eyes, and joined the concert of shrieks as principal performer. It was a dramatic pandæmonium!

In the midst of the turmoil I had the presence of mind to pull down the curtain, and thought to myself that accident had created a scene which for brilliancy and effect had never been equalled, and far surpassed all artificial strategy.

The whole word, Pygmalion, was represented by my wife, myself, the two Misses Pattle, and an obliging gentleman whose name I cannot recal.

It was acted in dumb show. There was fortunately an arched recess in the room, the base of which was some way from the ground; in this my wife, killingly arrayed in classical costume made of far-famed Dacca muslin, was placed to represent the image; a curtain concealing her from sight, and a small flight of steps communicating with the ground.

The room was arranged like a studio, the two Misses Pattle standing, as lovely statues, on each side of the arch, and the amiable anonymous gentleman, kneeling under a perforated table, with head and shoulders protruding, bare, and covered with powder like a bust.

Thus prepared, the scene was gone through in dumb show. I was myself the lover engaged in the studio, and walked about in classical costume, casting my eyes incessantly towards the lovely statue. My gravity was somewhat disturbed when the two statues, impatient at the protracted scene, occasionally, in a gentle whisper and not quite a statue-like tone, expostulated with the entranced lover, saying, "Make haste, Mr. Tayler, I am so hot and so tired—do make haste!"

"Defamation" was the last word enacted, the second syllable of which, with some liberty taken in the orthography, is represented in the annexed sketch.

HAY (FOR "A")

A prettier trio than that which formed the tableau "Hay" was seldom seen—it was composed of the two Misses Pattle and my wife.

With these and other amusements the holidays passed only too rapidly.

But, though I have given the principal place to the Doorga Pooja festivities, I must not omit to mention several minor incidents which added to our amusement.

One of the friends who visited us was Tom Holroyd, a gentleman who had lived in Calcutta many years.

He was the son of the celebrated Justice Holroyd and was well known in the metropolis. We subsequently became connected with the family, our eldest son, Skip-

with, having married the daughter of his brother Henry.

Among other attractive qualifications Tom Holroyd was specially celebrated for his unrivalled skill with the whip, and to our great delight he brought his tandem with him.

I took a sketch of him and his turn-out, which his daughter, Mrs. William Chamberlain, still has in her drawing-room; and I took advantage of his visit to Midnapore to obtain some lessons in the higher art of tandem driving, and witnessed with intense satisfaction the skill exhibited on several occasions.

Mr. Thomas Holroyd was High Sheriff of Calcutta when Queen Victoria came to the throne, and in that capacity proclaimed the accession, and signed the first address presented to Her Majesty from Bengal. His superlative coaching skill is described at length in the *Bengal Sporting Magazine* of December 1838.

It was while Tom Holroyd was with us that we arranged a grand buffalo-hunt, of which I took a large picture at the time, but gave it away to some of the party.

A semi-sporting scene took place one day, which is sufficiently characteristic to deserve description.

Information was brought to me that a large bear had, after attacking several children in a village very near our house, rushed into a cow-shed, and that the villagers had shut the door.

I immediately got my gun and went down, accompanied by Malet, L. Jackson, and C. Horne, to the spot. The bear was still in its prison, and the question was how to deal with the captive. He was described as

unusually ferocious, and it would therefore have been dangerous to let him loose among the bystanders, but there was a small square window on one side of the wall, and in peeping in I saw Mr. Bruin distinctly walking slowly and savagely round and round on his hind legs, evidently looking for some means of exit. I, therefore, took my gun and, looking through the window, watched until the brute was nearly opposite me, and then, as he stood up with his back towards me, I fired. At first the smoke prevented my seeing what had happened, but there was a dead silence; in two or three minutes afterwards we saw a thick stream of blood slowly oozing from under the door of the shed, and felt that the end had come. We opened the door, and saw him, without motion, weltering in his blood, stone dead.

One of the noticeable objects in the station of Midnapore was a rude but rather picturesque structure which went by the name of "Malet's Folly." It was a simple arch of large stones, erected at the end of the drive by Octavius Malet, an intimate friend, who had formerly been at the station, and returned to it, to our great satisfaction, while we were there. It was raised in remembrance of a favourite dog, and hence derived its uncharitable name. The satire had, however, little effect on the kind-hearted architect, for he erected a second, "in memoriam" of a favourite horse.

Some miles distant from the station of Midnapore, there was a small retreat called Beercool, situated by the sea-side, which, like Pooree, forms a delightful change during the hot months, and was generally resorted to.

Of the enjoyment caused by the sudden change of

temperature I have already, in my sixteenth chapter, dilated ; it is a change inconceivable to the inhabitants of an European climate, and is, in itself, almost a phenomenon.

We passed some very pleasant days there with Mr. and Mrs. Bayley during the hottest month, and with no little satisfaction. I took a sketch of her dear little

child, and as a contrast, next to it, that of a young sepoy, who had committed an awful murder—a handsome youth, who took his conviction with inconceivable indifference and coolness, as Asiatics often do, under the conviction that "Nuseeb," or destiny, is to be accepted with resignation.

THE MURDERER.

After some months, intimation being received of the expected return of H. Raikes to his appointment, we gave up our large house, and after remaining for some days with the Bayleys, my wife went to Calcutta and stayed with one of her brothers. On her return Mrs. Harrison was taken seriously ill. My wife was once more in demand as nurse, and she was in constant attendance on the invalid for many days, during which

we both remained at their house. Mr. Mills, the commissioner, came at that time to the Circuit House on official duty, bringing his wife with him. Neither of them are now surviving.

Shortly after Mrs. Harrison's recovery we left Midnapore, and once more found ourselves in the City of Palaces.

THE "GIRGIT."
(From a living specimen caught in my garden.)

During the latter days of our life at Midnapore several interesting specimens of animal life presented themselves to my observation.

This is a squirrel, *Genus Sciurus*, a handsome creature, rich brown in the body and yellow on the head and feet.

SQUIRREL ENJOYING THE MANGO.

Measurement recorded at the time—

Length of tail	17 inches.
From tip of nose to root of tail .	13 inches.

Charles Horne, a young civilian, who was then at the station, was an enthusiastic acolyte and was constantly in search of incidents.

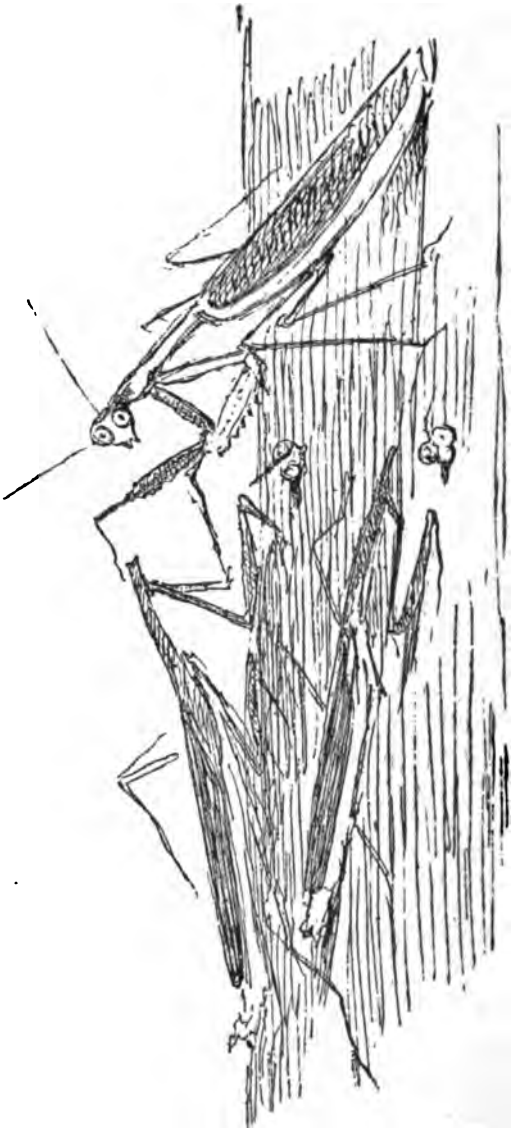
I painted a number of birds from life, which, in a sympathetic moment, I gave to him; but the following scraps, which I retained, are more or less interesting, and one decidedly curious.

The following memorandum in regard to the "Girgit" represented on page 319 I found among my papers:—

"Being desirous of putting an end to this creature's existence with as little suffering to the poor victim as possible, I consulted my jemadar, who told me he had a device for killing him almost instantaneously, and in a way which would cause but little pain. He accordingly brought a very small quantity of the old dirty tobacco from a native hookah, and, rubbing it on the end of a thin stick, inserted the opiate into the animal's mouth, who, in all simplicity, swallowed the same. After a slight struggle and a few heavings, he fell gradually into a stupor, allowing one to handle him, open his mouth, and take other liberties with his person, with little or no resistance, but he did not die this time, owing to the minute quantity of opium administered. A second dose despatched him."

Another curious incident witnessed was the following:—

One day we heard a strange croaking in one of the small stone reservoirs, which are built against the wall to receive the water from the pipes above. We went up to see what it was. There was a small snake with a frog in its mouth, which he was attempting to draw in by a



THE FIELD OF BATTLE.

sort of spasmodic suction. The frog's head and neck were well in the mouth, the lower part of the body and the legs were out, the latter convulsively kicking. This struggle went on for some time, but all of a sudden the frog disappeared, pulled in by a desperate effort; in he went with a slide, and the next moment the snake's side burst open, and out came the frog, looking rather confused and uncomfortable, but alive, sound and triumphant; his great size had been evidently too much for the snake's body, and the tension split the skin.

The last sketch represents one of the strangest sights I ever witnessed. The insect depicted is the Praying Mantis (M. Precatoria), one of the most remarkable creatures living. His name Mantis, or Prophet, and the epithet "praying," are derived from the constant attitude assumed by the insect, who is incessantly raising himself and stretching out his arms, as if in the act of devotion.

But the scene represented in the picture will, I fear, be regarded with some degree of scepticism, yet it is literally true.

There were three of the creatures, all of which we had caught on the same day; the largest was bright green, the two small ones a dull brown.

They had been carrying on fierce battle for some time, and at the close of the day the big one had decapitated his small antagonists, by a clear stroke of his scimitar hand.

In this position he remained as master of the field, when we went to bed, all of them being covered with a finger-glass.

The next morning when we again visited the battle-

field, we perceived, to our astonishment, that although the heads of the smaller combatants were lying on the ground, the headless bodies were still alive, and when the elder victor touched them, as he occasionally did, they slowly raised their bodies, and deliberately, though very mildly, responded to the blow by a quiet stroke of their horns. Heads with the prophets were clearly at a discount!

Before concluding this chapter I must here give two semi-sporting anecdotes, communicated to me by our friend Malet, as their interest is of a special kind, and the narrative is picturesque.

An Adventure with a Bear.

In the year 1833, I joined my first station at Midnapoor, the collector, J. H. D'Oyly, kindly giving me house-room, though I was previously unknown to him. My duty for the most part was the dull work of signing innumerable papers, all day, and every day.

Anyone may imagine how delighted I was, when one day I received a note from D. S. Money, the Government magistrate, telling me that news had been brought in of a tiger having been seen in the jungle, some five or six miles distant, and that if I liked to join a Lieutenant Wake, of the 34th Native Infantry, and himself, we would try if we could get a shot at him. All preparations were made, and I had only to bring my guns and myself.

I wrote a hurried note accepting the offer, then dressed myself in shooting attire, my coat being of a very strong silk canvas sort of stuff, and a white horse-hair cap

with a stiff peak (I mention this for a reason that will be seen further on).

We mounted our horses, and rode out to the appointed place in the jungle, a small open space free from underwood, but shaded by a few fine trees.

Here we found waiting for us some 400 or 500 natives on foot, carrying for the most part long sticks, but some armed with small hatchets or axes, and a few with matchlocks; there were also some with bundles of what I afterwards found were fireworks; there were also two elephants, one, which carried some attendants of the Rajah of Midnapoor (who did not himself appear), and the other had a great heap of cordage on his back, which I found on inquiry was a large strong rope net, about 100 yards long, and some seven or eight feet deep, of which I was presently to learn the use.

David Money, as the most experienced of the party, took the conduct of the proceedings.

First the net was set up in a line, some twenty yards distant from the trees, and a few feet within the underwood of the jungle, so as to form a sort of barrier to delay the tiger in his expected advance. In one of the largest trees, a sort of huge nest called a "machaun" had been created, in which we three sahibs were to sit and wait. After fixing the net, the natives, whose duty it was to beat the jungle, were sent off a distance of some two miles or so, to form as large a semi-circle as they could; the matchlock-men, and the firework-men being distributed at intervals, the elephants to be at either corner, and all, on the signal of a gun being fired, to yell and shout, and drive every living thing towards us.

We then mounted to our nest, each with a native

servant to carry our spare guns. A long, weary time we waited. At last the signal-gun was fired. For a time, though of course on the alert, we saw nothing, we heard nothing; we did not speak above a whisper.

Then, at a distance, a matchlock was fired, after an interval another; now and then we could see the flash of the fireworks, and after a time the faint sound of a distant shout reached us. This waiting was very exciting, and as I had heard that it was the custom of tigers to slink away at the first alarm, I was momentarily in hope that we should see our friend crouching along till he was stopped by the net in front of us, when, by previous arrangement, Money, Wake, and myself were to give him a volley. We waited and waited till our hands trembled on our guns, which we kept at full cock, pointed at the net; but no tiger came.

On came the beaters, they were plainly heard; the matchlocks fired again and again, the fireworks fizzed and crackled, but still *no* tiger.

Some jungle-fowl and other birds flew over our heads, some pretty spotted deer came trotting gently up, saw the net, and cleared it at a bound.

An old wild sow with a litter of little pigs came up, sniffed at the net, turned back again, and were seen no more.

Then, as the beaters came nearer and nearer, a large ugly beast came up. It was a bear!

I had never seen one before, except behind iron bars. He tumbled right into the net, which gave with his weight, and he got entangled in it, rolling over and over.

We all fired, for by this time we had given up all hopes of our tiger. We were sure we had hit him, as

we were not above twenty or thirty yards off, if so much; but the bear disentangled himself, and retreated to the jungle through the beaters, who respectfully made room for him.

We had to get down from our "machaun" to follow him up and finish him, everyone in a dreadful state of excitement, the natives shouting, and all making a terrible noise.

Money and Wake got down by a rough sort of ladder, by which we had mounted.

I could not wait for that but climbed down the stem of the tree. I called to my servant to give me my spare gun, but in the excitement he did not hear me, and I could not stop.

We three made for the place where the bear had been struggling in the net; there we found blood and hair. Calling on five or six men armed with axes to come with me, and taking a thick stick in my hand, and thinking that Money and Wake would also come, I followed up the track of the bear by noting a spot of blood here and there.

After going some 200 or 300 yards into the jungle, we came upon the beast crouching at the root of a tree, with his head between his fore-legs, in the same way as a badger when waiting the attack of a dog.

I said to the men with me, "Now all of you go in with your hatchets, all together strike him on the head, and you will kill him." What they answered I do not know, but they did not go in. I had heard that wherever their officers led the Sepoys would go, and foolishly thinking that my five or six followers would do so, I took a hatchet from the man nearest to me, held it

with both hands to give greater force to the blow, and with all my might struck the bear just below the eyes.

I found afterwards that the force of the blow had turned the head of the axe upon the handle.

Not one of the natives, as I had expected they would have done, seconded me in any way. Before I could repeat the blow the beast had risen on his hind legs, to my surprise.

He was taller than I was. I tried to strike again, but the brute was upon me. I, of course, gave myself up for a dead man, and my first thought was that I wished it had been a tiger instead of an ignoble beast like a bear. Still it was my duty to do what I could to preserve my life.

I had heard that these Indian bears, instead of hugging as they are said to do in Europe, destroy their victims by inserting their claws below the chest, and tearing the ribs open like a fowl prepared for a grill, at the same time destroying the face with their teeth. To prevent this I threw my left arm round the beast's neck, grasping his long hair tightly, and embracing him so closely that he could not get his claws in between himself and me; and to prevent his biting my face I tried to catch hold of his tongue to keep it to his lower jaw, so that if he did bite he must necessarily bite his own tongue first (I had seen this done with savage dogs). To my great relief I found that the lower jaw of the bear was broken.

I let go the hold I had on his tongue, and thrust my right arm and hand as far as I could down his throat with the idea of choking him, still having my left firmly clutched round his neck.

The beast reared up and dashed me down again. I felt like a baby in strength compared with him; but knowing all depended on my firm hold, I would not let go. I had no knife, or I could have stabbed him.

All this time the natives were dancing and leaping round us, but doing nothing to help.

I called out to them to bring up the elephants, which I could see through the jungle. They did so, but instead of bringing them up close, so that they could have pulled the bear off me, one of the riders, if not two of them, fired at us; fortunately neither ball hit me, nor, I believe, did they hit the bear.

I then called out to tell the other sahibs (Money and Wake). After what seemed a long time to me, as I and the bear continued our wrestling bout, Wake came up. Putting up his glass, he stopped about eight or ten yards off, and called out should he fire? I said "Yes." He did fire, but whether he hit the bear or not I do not know; thank God, he did not hit me.

Just as Wake had fired Money came up; he did not wait to ask whether he should fire or not, but walked straight up, and putting the muzzle of his gun to the beast's forehead, fired both barrels at once, and an up-country native chuprasee at the same moment struck the bear across the back with his sword, and the beast fell dead upon me. I crawled out from under him, not very much the worse.

I had a rather severe cut on the head from one of the incisor teeth of his upper jaw, which had gone through the peak of my cap, the thickness of which must have done much to preserve my skull, and the thick silk canvas of my coat had also protected me; so that with

the exception of the cut on my head, a few other trifling cuts on my face, and scratches on my right hand from his upper teeth, and a few on my legs from his hinder claws, as I suppose, I am thankful to say that I was unhurt.

The skin of the bear, when cured, measured six feet four inches from the tip of his nose to the end of his tail.

The next anecdote has also been given me by O. Malet, and is here printed in his own words :—

"The following account of the killing of a tiger was told me by the killer, who, at the time of the occurrence, was a very young man. I shall write it as well as I can, as he told it, merely altering the name, as I have not the actor's leave to put him in print, and I do not know if he is alive or dead."

"My father had been an officer in the army, but died when I was a child; my mother had died at my birth; so I was brought up by an old aunt in a country town, and in due time sent to school, but had no opportunities of learning to shoot, or anything whatever in the sporting way. I had plenty to eat and drink (I mention this just to show what a rum sort of youth I was), was strong and healthy. A cadetship was offered me in India, and I gladly accepted it. I came out, as it was called, direct, without going to Addiscombe, and so when I arrived in India, was, I have been told, remarkably boyish for my age, just sixteen.

"I was sent up to join my regiment at Jubbulpore, then a very shooting station. Many men in the regiment were in the habit of taking a few days' leave in

turn, and going into the jungle for sport. It came to my turn, I was told, when we were at mess.

"'Oh, Jones, give me your turn; you have never shot anything but crows and paddy-birds, and there are tigers and bears, and all sorts of beasts in the jungle.

"'Well,' said I, 'I should like to shoot a tiger, and I will try and shoot "Mumbo-Jumbo."'

"Now this was the commonly accepted name of a noted man-eating tiger in those parts; it had long been the ambition of everyone to shoot him, but as yet no one had succeeded in doing so.

"My brother officers were so much amused at the idea of my shooting 'Mumbo-Jumbo' that they made it rather disagreeable, and I left the room.

"'Don't forget to bring home "Mumbo-Jumbo," old crow-shooter,' shouted one or more as I went out.

"I was, I allow, rather annoyed, and though I had said it in joke, I now determined that I would, if I could, get Mumbo-Jumbo. How to do it was the question; where to find him I did not know, as I was quite new to the station, and only knew that there was thick jungle on all sides of it. A happy thought struck me when in bed that night, and at daybreak I acted on it. I sent to Gumput Singh, notorious as being the best shikaree in the place. He came.

"'Now, Gumput Singh,' said I, 'I want you to go with me, and kill Mumbo-Jumbo.' The old man laughed.

"'No, Sahib; it is not for such as you to kill Mumbo-Jumbo. He eats men. Can a mouse kill a cat?' And the old fellow laughed again till the tears ran down his face.

"I assured him that I was perfectly serious, and told him if I was successful I would give him 100 rupees. This offer put matters in quite a new light. Gumput Singh told me that if I would attend to his directions he might, with God's pleasure, be able to show me Mùmbo-Jumbo, but that it would take some days to do it, and that we must take some provisions with us, for that we must light no fire.

"I spent the day in cleaning up my guns, taking imaginary aims at Mumbo-Jumbo, represented by a bolster in the corner of the room. I did not sleep much that night. I had not gone to mess, for fear of being again laughed at. The next morning at daybreak I was ready. I had old Gumput Singh all ready. I had a double-barrelled gun and rifle, rather old ones, that had once been the property of my father, and an old French couteau-de-chasse buckled round my waist, with a bag of biscuits, and a bottle of tea on the other side to balance it.

"Off we went; we soon came to the jungle. Gumput Singh took me first to a place where the animal had made a meal one or two days before on an unfortunate cowkeeper, whose head, hands, and feet, and some other remains were still there. Two or three vultures, too much gorged to move at our approach, sat near us. We tracked the tiger at least half a mile, and came upon a place where he had rested, but he had left some time before we reached. As our tracking had taken up a long time, and we were now in the depths of the jungle, Gumput Singh called a halt. I cut down a lot of small branches from the bushes near, and made myself a tolerably comfortable bed under a large tree, tied my

handkerchief over my face to keep away malaria, loosened the strings of my shooting boots, ate two or three of my biscuits, smoked a pipe, rather against the old man's wishes, and composed myself to sleep. How he managed I do not know, but when I awoke in the morning, rather chilly, he was wide awake, all ready for our work. My toilet did not take me long. We went back to the track where we had left it, and all that weary day we followed it. Night came again, and we retired to rest as we had done the night before, and the next day we again took up the track. For a long time it was the same weary work; we did not speak above a whisper, as we did not know when we might come upon the tiger. The extraordinary thing was that all this time, with the exception of a few small birds, we neither saw nor heard a living creature; but the jungle itself was in places very beautiful, the most part low underwood, but in others fine large trees, sometimes clean and straight without a limb, nearly close together, only branching out overhead, and sometimes in clumps, as if planted in an English park, and often with beautiful climbing plants, which grew on them, hanging down in beautiful festoons. Our journey was necessarily slow, as in many places the track was quite invisible to me, but I had faith in my leader, and he led me slowly on. About noon we came, after a very toilsome part of the march over rocky ground, to the back of a ravine some fifty yards in breadth, the bottom of which was covered with smooth sand, and low bushes scattered sparingly over it. Here, for the first time, I with my own eyes saw the plain track of Mumbo-Jumbo, the imprint of his four feet, and recognisable as his, for one toe was wanting in one of

his four feet. We both stopped and looked at the track; we looked at each other; then we retreated some little distance that we might hold a consultation. We could see the track on the other side of the ravine, and the track did not go across, but in a direct line upwards. Gumput Singh told me that this ravine was known to be the tiger's home, but how far up he did not know, nor could he tell if he was now resting in it or not.

"In the starry moonlight we could see the track for some 100 yards steadily leading upwards along the ravine. I had lately been reading Lloyd's *Northern Field Sports*, and thought we might ring the tiger, as Mr. Lloyd describes ringing the bear, viz. tracking him to a certain point, and then making a wide circle to see that he had not gone out of it. I explained this to the old man; he took it in at once, and quite approved that this should be done, at the same time knowing the habit of these beasts to slink off at the slightest warning of danger. We argued that I should ensconce myself behind one of the bushes in the ravine, through which I could see, while Gumput was to go up as far as he could see the tracks from the bank, then make a good circuit round, and come back home.

"This we carried out. I stood behind my bush, my double-barrelled gun, at full cock, in my hand, my rifle at my feet, and my knife loosened in its sheath, and I must confess that my heart beat louder than usual, but after a time that got quieter. Gumput had told me that if the tiger did come down, if not much alarmed, he would probably come by nearly the same track as he had gone up. After waiting for about an

hour, I fancied I heard the sound of a tread. All was still as night.

"I certainly *did* hear it, but could see nothing. Suddenly from behind, and above a bush which covered his body from me, I saw the head of the tiger at a distance of not more than twelve or fifteen yards. He turned his head about as a man would do when looking for something. He caught my eye. I fired both barrels. I had just time to drop my gun and hold my knife, with the handle pressed against my chest, when the beast was upon me. I had held the knife firm, and it had gone right into him. I was, of course, knocked down, and was covered with blood, but the tiger was dead on the top of me, and I had not even a scratch. I kept my rifle loaded for fear of accidents, but re-loaded my gun and fired again, to give notice to old Gumput Singh that I was all right. In a short time the old man came up. 'Thank God,' said he, 'for giving you the strength to kill this beast.' Then he began to abuse the tiger: 'Oh, son of a pig, and most pigged of pigs, no more will you make poor mothers childless, and poor women widows; as a son of Satan you lived, and as a son of Satan you have died."

"We then made our way to the nearest village, got many willing hands to carry the tiger; some ran off to tell a neighbouring zemindar, who came with an elephant to carry me and Gumput, and in the evening we entered in triumph in cantonment.

"I had never been on an elephant before. Mumbo-Jumbo was carried by some twelve or sixteen men in front of us, and some hundred natives of the villages round about went in front, dancing and capering to

show their joy at their dire enemy being killed. I received the warm congratulations of my brother officers, and was no more laughed at as a crow-shooter."

CHAPTER XIX.

SECRETARIAT FINESSE.

Calcutta once more.—Kindness of Wilberforce Bird, Lieutenant-Governor.—Proposed Departure of Mr. Hawkins, Registrar of Sudder Court.—Proceedings adopted for filling the Vacancy. — Secretariat Diplomacy. — Secret Scheme for depriving me of my Chance.—Correspondence.—My "love for the fine arts" interferes with my appointment to the Registrarship of the Sudder Court.—Exposure of Secretariat *finesse*.—Subsequent Unanimous Selection for the Secretaryship to the Sudder Board.—Frustrated, how?—Correspondence.—Appointment as Magistrate of Kishnaghur.—Leave Calcutta.—Letters from Friends in acknowledgment of Portraits taken.

On leaving Midnapore we once more entered the "City of Palaces." Mr. Wilberforce Bird was still Deputy-Governor, but was about to leave India.

He was as kind as ever, and expressed an earnest desire to find a good berth for me before his departure. My own wish was to remain, if possible, in Calcutta, where I had many friends, and he had promised to give me an appointment on the first suitable vacancy.

I was still living on the hope which "springs eternal in the human breast," when the following little episode occurred, and as it is a choice specimen of that peculiar and mysterious process which may be called secretariat diplomacy, which does not often have its "penetralia" laid bare, I shall be possibly doing some future aspirant a service by a partial revelation of its action.

"Officialism unveiled," indeed, would furnish subjects for a bulky volume, in which the present, though a mild instance, would form a not unworthy item. Like Hamlet's ghost, I proceed to unfold my tale.

I do not introduce this incident from any personal motive, and in fact withhold much that might give to the narrative the appearance of vindictiveness or ill-will, but the whole transaction was public, creating considerable interest and discussion at the time, and necessarily forms a part of my autobiography, whilst as an instance of official power left without control it is of some public importance.

While still in the belief that no vacancy in Calcutta was in the wind, I was one day dining with James Pattle, then the father of the Civil Service, a name well-known to all Anglo-Indians.

I was seated next to Mr. Rattray, one of the judges of the Sudder Court, when he suddenly turned round and said:

"I say, Tayler, should not you be a candidate for our Registrarship if it fell vacant?"

"Of course I should," I replied; "I acted in it for a month two years ago, and received an expression of official approval; it 's the very appointment I should most desire."

"Well," he said, "all I know is that Tucker" (another of the judges) "yesterday received a confidential communication from the Bengal Secretary enclosing the names of seven or eight men, and begging him to lay it before us that we might demi-officially mark them in the order of preference as the most competent successors to Hawkins" (the other registrar), "who is going home; and your name, I am sure, is not among them."

On hearing this I shrugged my shoulders, took an extra glass of Mr. Pattle's tip-top champagne to help me swallow my indignation, and the next morning wrote off a letter to Charles Tucker to ask if what I had heard was true.

His answer confirmed the story. He *had* received such a missive, and in *confidence*. In confidence it truly was, and was accompanied with a small stroke of secretariat skill which was worthy of a long apprenticeship in the department.

Charles Tucker, one of the most honoured men in the Company's service, was a dear and intimate friend of mine, who was at all times ready to forward my interests, and who would at any time have flared up at any injustice or unworthy treatment of me. The Bengal Secretary *knew this well*, but he had his own object to accomplish; his own "young man" to patronise. The great point, therefore, was to *disarm my special friend*, and prevent him from advancing my claims or opposing my supersession. This was the reason of selecting Charles Tucker to execute his confidential mission, and this first astute move was ingeniously strengthened by his adding in his note, "We all know that W. Tayler would have all the ability, but I fear that his *love for the fine*

arts would interfere with the drudgery of the appointment."

On receiving this information I immediately remonstrated with the writer against this secret and unworthy procedure, protested indignantly at the unjustifiable exclusion even of my *name* among the candidates, pointed out that a host of high officials had been only too thankful to use my poor artistic abilities for the benefit of themselves and families, and finally challenged him to point out any instance in which "my love for the fine arts" had ever interfered with the discharge of my duty.

Further correspondence ensued. Charles Tucker at once recognised the dodge, *and threw up the "confidential commission."*

The Secretary was thus compelled, though much against his will, to have the matter, instead of being carried out secretly by a side wind, laid *publicly* before the judges of the court, that they might *publicly* and officially select a candidate in the order of preference, and on the ground of official competency.

What was the result? Unhappy *I*, whose *name* even the Secretary had not deigned to enter, appeared as *second* on the list of five, with two "number ones" in my favour, publicly chosen by the entire conclave of judges in the order of merit!

This result was, as may be imagined, a severe though tacit rebuke for the diplomatist; but he was equal to the occasion.

The civilian first on the list and above me by only one vote, was George Plowden, an officer senior to me in the service, a man of great ability, then officiating as secretary to the Sudder Board of Revenue.

On hearing of his selection he intimated his readiness to accept the registrarship, thereby, of course, vacating his own appointment of secretaryship to the Sudder Board, a berth nearly, if not quite, as good as the registrarship.

The members of the Sudder Board were then requested, not by secret and confidential bye-play, which I believe had attracted Sir Henry Hardinge's notice, but openly, to select publicly three candidates in the order of merit.

The members of the Board then present were Mr. James Pattle and Mr. John Lowis, a man of whom the service was ever proud.

It was a matter of notoriety at the time that these gentlemen's views on ordinary matters so widely differed that they hardly ever agreed, yet, strange to say, on this occasion their "unanimity was wonderful."

They both *at once concurred in nominating me*, and declined mentioning Nos. 2 and 3, as they said they would be men long senior to myself, and the nomination would therefore be invidious.

This selection was, of course, highly gratifying to me; my appointment was considered certain, and I had several demi-official interviews with George Plowden, at his request, to ascertain the state of the Board's file, and receive some information as to the more important matters under discussion.

Alas, for calculations of honesty, truth, and common sense when opposed to secretariat diplomacy!

Two days after this complimentary selection, George Plowden was sent for by the Bengal Secretary; a private interview took place, and when he left the house he signified, to the surprise of all concerned, his intention

to retain his present appointment! No reason whatever was assigned for this sudden and mysterious change of mind, but the effect was that the door of the Sudder Board was closed against the unhappy "lover of the fine arts."

There was, however, yet another struggle before officialism could finally triumph.

George Plowden's retention of his office in the Board left me No. 1 on the Court's list for the registrarship; and as the selection called for was publicly and emphatically based on the ground, not of seniority but merit, my right to the appointment was considered indefeasible!

But my opponent had not been Bengal Secretary for so many years to be beaten from his purpose by such commonplace pleas as those of justice or consistency.

On my claim being preferred he at once abandoned the ground of selection which *he had himself ostentatiously set forth*, and with amusing effrontery declared that, as there were *several* seniors on the list they must *have the offer of the appointment before Mr. Tayler!* One of these seniors, Mr. B. Colvin, accepted it, and I was stranded, retaining (as my only comfort, and it was not a slight one) the compliment which both the Sudder Court and Sudder Board had officially and publicly paid me.

The Secretary had the satisfaction of mortifying me, who had thus dared to oppose him, but *he* also suffered defeat, for his real object was frustrated.

The fact was he had schemed to obtain the appointment on the *ground of merit* for an officer junior to me, the same gentleman whom years afterwards he sent to

succeed and vilify me at Patna, of which a true and graphic picture has yet to be drawn.

This scheme was frustrated, and to prevent my appointment and preserve his official prestige, as at least he thought, he was compelled to stultify himself by falling back on the plea of *seniority!*

It is so seldom that "secretariat finesse" is so fully exposed as it was in this instance, that this narration may be interesting; the letters which I have given below are those which passed on the occasion; the originals are still in my possession. They will give a vivid idea of the *real facts* cleared from the obscurities of red-tape, or the possibility of partiality in my own interested narration.

I would ask all those who are interested in the revelation of official mystery to read these lines with such attention as they can conveniently afford to give.

The first letter is from Mr. C. Tucker, one of the High Court judges, written in reply to my note asking if what I had heard at Mr. Pattle's dinner-party was true; it established, as will be seen, the point of the demi-official or confidential reference, and also that the man the Secretary wanted was my junior, *i.e.* Mr. Samuells.

"My dear Taylee, "Sunday Morning.

"Hawkins proposes to go to the Cape in January for a couple of years for the benefit of his health, and hence a *locum tenens* will be required.

"Halliday has spoken to me on the subject, and furnished me with a list of the names he intends to submit to Sir H. Hardinge for his consideration, and also intimated that he wished a demi-

official communication from me, with the Court's opinion as to their several merits. *Your name is not amongst them*, but will be submitted with the others for Sir Henry's selection.

"Ever yours affectionately,

"C. TUCKER."

On receiving this letter I wrote to the Secretary asking why he had not entered my name in the list, on which, it appeared, he wrote to reproach Mr. Tucker with abuse of confidence.

"MY DEAR TAYLER, "Monday, October 28, 1844.

"You are likely to get me into a scrape. Halliday has just sent me a copy of your note to him, and of his reply, and expressing some surprise how a confidential demi-official communication like his could have got abroad; evidently meaning to insinuate that I had abused his confidence.

"I told him that I had told you, certainly; that when you came to me yesterday morning you appeared already acquainted with the circumstance of your name having been left out.

"With the best intentions, I see I am likely to get into scrapes on both sides, and I have requested Halliday to withdraw his commission to me; and until I hear from you again I had rather not see you or anyone on the subject.

"Yours affectionately,

"C. TUCKER."

This letter produced the following answer from me, written after I had been nominated by the judges as *second* in the list:—

"MY DEAR TUCKER,

"I am sorry for the annoyance caused you, though it must be but trifling in comparison to what I have suffered; but is it fair that at this stage of the proceedings the list should be withdrawn, and the question settled without the deliberate discussion you promised it should meet with? Halliday's conduct has been deceitful, and forgive me if I add that you might have

paused before you accepted a secret commission involving so palpable an injustice as the omission of my name.

"The mere idea that a 'fondness for the fine arts' *might* prevent me from devoting myself to the duties of so important an office is surely not sufficient to deprive me of the claim which the fact of my having once acted to the satisfaction of the Court, and having again been nominated for the appointment, naturally gives me above all others. Governors, Deputy-Governors, Members of Council, and Secretaries are glad enough to tax that gift which is now quoted against me, and even Halliday might remember that he was once a votary of Thespis, and is still a performer on the double bass.

"Yours affectionately,

"W. TAYLER."

"MY DEAR TUCKER,

"I send you two notes received from Halliday. My object in doing so is to expose to you his ——.

"*You know* that his purpose is, if he can, to bring in Samuells, a man considerably my junior! Yet he gives as a reason for omitting my name that there are men with whom even I would not wish to compete! Then look at the humbug, for I can call it nothing else, about my health!

"Did he think of my health when he was instrumental in transferring me to Jessore, the most unhealthy district in India?

"I have told him I would compete with any 'He' he can produce, and that the last two Registrars—the best there have been—were the *two most sickly men in India!*

"Can you, a man of high and honourable feeling, support him, were he fifty secretaries in one, after such an *exposé*?

"Yours affectionately,

"W. TAYLER."

The "two notes," referred to in the above letter, must have been detained by Mr. Tucker at the time and forgotten, as I cannot find them with the rest of the correspondence.

"My dear Tayler, "Wednesday.

"Be assured that my feelings towards you have undergone no change whatever. I shall probably see Halliday in my walk to-morrow morning, and will not fail to use my best endeavours in your behalf.

"Ever yours affectionately,

"C. Tucker."

When I wrote to ask Mr. Rattray, another of the judges of the Sudder, whether my name had appeared in the list, he had written:—

"My dear Tayler,

"Your name is not amongst those submitted to us; Had it been so, I should not have hesitated a moment; but the question does not appear to be yet conclusively settled, and you may still have time to set forth your pretensions. I shall be very glad to hear that you have done so successfully.

"Yours sincerely,

(Signed) "R. H. Rattray."

He afterwards wrote the following:—

"My dear Tayler,

"I got your note on the road home just now.

"The *five* were—

"Plowden,

"Tayler (William),

"Martin,

"Samuells, and—

and truly I cannot say, but the name of *Malet** comes across my mind as the man, but I cannot vouch for it.

"I had heard of the Nuddea offer. If worth having, take it; for it's as clear as mud (as the saying is) you are not to be Sudderized—*why*, I really have no notion—but evidently there is

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* No; it was B. Colvin.

a loose screw somewhere, may be in the paint-box, on which you have been convicted, and banishment deemed a suitable sentence! I am sorry for it.

"Yours sincerely,
(Signed) "R. H. RATTRAY."

Some days afterwards I received the following from Mr. Abercrombie Dick, another of the judges:—

"Chowringhee,
"MY DEAR TAYLER, "October 27th, 1844.

"I knew, even by sight, only three of those on the list sent to me, and I stated my opinion of them. As the judges were requested to name any others that might occur to them, I named you, and was rather astonished to find you had been omitted in the list, as you had once officiated in the appointment, and, as I believed, with satisfaction.

"I had then very recently joined the Court. I was led also to think of you from your having lately acted as judge in my old district,* much to the satisfaction of those under you, and the people.

"I did not intimate what I had done, to you, not wishing to create any hope from merely *my* single nomination.

"Yours sincerely,
(Signed) "ABERCROMBIE DICK."

Two days after Mr. Rattray wrote again, telling me the result of the public consultation of the judges:—

"MY DEAR TAYLER,

"Of five names sent in, you, by count of noses, stood second, all the judges being present.

"The rest lies between H., Sir H. H., yourself, and the Fates; and all I can add is, may they be propitious; that is, the *Aitches* (as the Bengalies would write it).

"Yours sincerely,
(Signed) "R. A. RATTRAY."

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* Midnapore.

The following letters will establish the facts of my subsequent nomination to the Sudder Board in lieu of Mr. Plowden, and the assurance of my appointment on his accepting the registrarship, but it throws no light upon the subsequent sudden and mysterious change of mind of Mr. Plowden and his determination to retain his post; that was a dark manœuvre of which the reason was never divulged, and remains up to the present day *altâ mente repostum* of the Secretariat and the parties themselves. Mr. Plowden, a very able man, was subsequently enrolled as the established "flautist" of the Philharmonic Society!

From G. PLOWDEN, Esq., Secretary to the Sudder Board.

"MY DEAR TAYLER,

"I am happy to tell you that the members have concurred in proposing you for the acting Secretaryship to the Board in the event of my being removed, and I hope that their nomination may be approved.

"If you could find it convenient to come here not later than ten, I should wish to have a little conversation with you about the work in case of your succeeding me. I would go to you, but am very busy, which you are not, I believe, just now.

"Perhaps you had better not mention that you have heard of your nomination from me.

"Yours sincerely,

"November." "GEO. PLOWDEN.

I then received a note from M. J. Pattle, the senior member of the Board:—

"MY DEAR TAYLER,

"I told the Private Secretary we had sent up your name. He said of course you would be appointed if Plowden

accepted the succession to Hawkins, which he said he had not done.

"If you pass this way, look in; there is a hitch, and I think I can help you to remove it.

"Yours sincerely,
"J. PATTLE."

Very shortly after this I heard of the mysterious interview, and Mr. Plowden's sudden resolve to refuse the registrarship and remain where he was; and on informing Mr. Tucker, received from him the following:—

"MY DEAR TAYLER,

"I have not heard of Plowden's change of mind, but conclude you have it from good authority.

"For the Registrarship the doubt will be between you and W. H. Martin; but as you have two No. 1's in our list, and Martin has none, you should get it, if Sir Henry abides by our list.

"Should Martin, however, get it, would you go to Hooghly as additional judge, which is Martin's present office? It is a nice station, and there is a year's work there, which would give you time to look about you.

"Yours affectionately,
"C. TUCKER."

Now, as the whole of this diplomatic campaign arose, at least ostensibly, from the official condemnation by the Bengal Secretary of my "love for the fine arts," and as I am writing about myself, and must, therefore, be egotistical, I may, I feel sure, be allowed, without presumption, to say a few words regarding my own peculiar position, artistically considered.

Strange as it may appear, it is an actual fact, that in the great City of Palaces, the capital of British India, there was no single living being, except myself, who had the capacity of taking a likeness.

As a necessary consequence, I became, at least as far as portraiture was concerned, the artist of India, and that this may not appear an empty or presumptuous boast, I will here quote a few out of my many notes and letters which I received from friends in recognition of portraits taken for them by me.

I had, at times, nearly a hundred applications from mothers, husbands, and lovers, and there is scarcely a family of those days who does not, or did not, possess a specimen of my poor pencil.

This fact, not only known but made use of by Governors-General, Governors' secretaries, and all others of my fellow-creatures, rendered the affected purism of the official conscience rather unseasonable, and was obviously a mere pretext to facilitate a concealed purpose.

The following are a few of the letters referred to:—

From the Honourable C. H. Cameron, Member of the Supreme Council, Calcutta.

"My dear Mr. Tayler, "September 21.

"Before I start for Barrackpore I must send you my best thanks for the beautiful product of your pencil which Mrs. Cameron has brought home with her.

"It is much the best likeness of her that has ever been taken, the picture is truly beautiful, and most valuable to me, and I shall always be very grateful to you for this exertion of your delightful art.

"Very faithfully yours,

"C. H. Cameron.

"Mrs. Cameron, in looking over this, declares that the picture is hers, which appropriation of it I shall strenuously resist."

From Mrs. JOHN LOWIS, Wife of J. Lowis, B.C.S.

"MY DEAR MR. TAYLER,

"Mary tells me that you have been admiring the two little bronzes which accompany this note. Will you do me the favour of accepting them?

"I know you will appreciate them. I shall feel a pleasure in thinking they are in your hands, and that in looking at them you will ever be reminded of the gratitude I feel towards you for the kindness with which you have so often even forestalled my wishes in giving me the portraits of my children and those most dear to me.

"A valuable treasure they are to me, I assure you, and small is the return I can ever make, but pray add to my many obligations that of accepting this New-Year's gift.

"And believe me, with kindest regards,

"Very sincerely yours,

"L. LOWIS."

From Mrs. EVELYN GORDON, Wife of E. Gordon, Esq., Member of the Sudder Board, Calcutta.

"MY DEAR MR. TAYLER,

"My very sincere thanks conveys but a very indifferent idea of my gratitude to you for the very beautiful likeness you have given me of my poor husband, whom I am perhaps to leave though only for a few short months.

"Be assured that one of my first visits shall be to your children, and believe also I shall give you as true and faithful a report of them as your exquisite pencil has given me of Mr. Gordon.

"Yours very sincerely,

"SOPHIE FLORA GORDON."

From Mrs. MURPHY, Wife of Dr. Murphy.

"MY DEAR MR. TAYLER,

"I have just now received the picture of the dear studio, and my dear husband, and in saying I return you a thousand thanks for the same I do not express half my feel-

ings of gratitude towards you, for the trouble you have taken and all the kindness you have shown to me; but ever believe that I shall fondly cherish the memory of those so dearly loved, wherever may be my lot in life.

"Ever believe me to be, with very many thanks,

"Your affectionate friend,

"HARRIETTE NORMAN."

From Mrs. PHILLIP MELVILLE.

"MY DEAR MRS. TAYLER,

"My husband is delighted with my picture, and is writing himself to thank Mr. Tayler for all the trouble he has taken.

"I have shown the likeness to two or three persons, who unanimously agree that it is a sweet picture and a good likeness.

"Will you tell Mr. Tayler how much obliged we are to him for having taken up his leisure time in gratifying Mr. Melville's wish to have a good likeness of me.

"Believe me, my dear Mrs. Tayler,

"Very sincerely yours,

"EMILY JANE MELVILLE."

From Mrs. ELIOTT, Wife of the Hon. Daniel Eliott.

"MY DEAR MR. TAYLER, "Saturday.

"I am at a loss now sufficiently to thank you for your extreme kindness in taking a likeness of our dear girl for us, but you must estimate our feelings in this matter by your own as a parent, and then you will have some idea how warmly our hearts appreciate your kindness.

"I am sure as often as we look upon the picture we shall bear the artist in grateful remembrance, who has thus pleasingly represented our loved daughter before us.

"My husband thinks the resemblance *quite* perfect in every way, but I am of opinion *more* than justice has been done to her features. However, a mother's vanity is easily reconciled to this, and I would not have noticed the same, but I was told you wished for our candid opinion on the subject.

"It will be a treasure, indeed, by which to bring our dear one before our mind's eye when she has left us; and with many more thanks than I can express,

"Believe me,

"Yours sincerely and obliged,

"GEORGINA ELIOTT."

From Mrs. JACKSON (formerly Miss Pattle), Wife of Dr. Jackson.

"DEAR MR. TAYLER,

"Our notes appear to have crossed on the road. Thank you for letting me see the sweet little picture; it has all the calm beauty of death, and yet it does not make us feel painfully its presence. What a treasure to a mother such a picture! You and Mrs. Tayler have sources of happiness of which nothing can ever deprive you, for you are constantly ministering to the sad, and God's blessing with you rests.

"Ever yours,

"M. JACKSON."

From PHILLIP MELVILLE, B.C.S.

"MY DEAR TAYLER,

"Emily has just shown me Zelica, and I cannot help expressing to you how much pleased I am with it.

"I congratulate you heartily on your complete success, and myself on the promised possession of such a capital performance. You have so copied the original that I can be in love with its copy! more I cannot say. ('Zyadah hudd, adub,' as the natives write.)

"With many, many thanks for the trouble you have so kindly taken,

"Believe me,

"Yours very sincerely,

"P. MELVILLE."

From Colonel BUTTERWORTH, at the Cape.

"MY DEAR TAYLER,

"I hoped, on leaving home this morning, to be back in time to give you my opinion personally on the work you have so more than kindly executed. I have been looking at it from the

moment of my return till now, and, in truth, I do not see a feature that I would have altered. Each and every one is shadowed forth with a finish that is most touching, and which will be doubly so when the wide surf separates me from the original. Your own warm feelings will lead you fully to understand mine on the present occasion, and will convey far more than any words which I might use to express my heartfelt gratitude for your great kindness and delicate consideration in taking, or *thinking* of taking, our likenesses.

"With our united kindest regards,

"Believe me,

"Yours very sincerely,

(Signed) "W. BUTTERWORTH."

I will only here repeat that in introducing the somewhat painful story I have been actuated by no other motive than to disclose what may fairly be called an intrigue, which, if it had been carried out "confidentially," would not only have deprived me of an important post, but would without my knowledge have served as a ground for future deprivations, and thus ruined my prospects in the service.

In writing therefore an autobiography which professes to relate without scruple all the incidents of my life, I feel not only justified, but bound to give the narrative in "its entirety," and only wish, for reasons that will be understood by all but my calumniators, that the person principally concerned had not been the individual specified.

The accidental discovery of the unworthy plot alone prevented the serious injury which would have otherwise been caused by the "stigma of unfitness" for high appointment.

CHAPTER XX.

KISHNAGHUR.

Leave Calcutta for my New Appointment as Magistrate of Kishnaghur.—Brief Account of the District of Nudiya.—Report to Government on the subject of Judicial Reform.—Comic Incident in connection with the subject.—The Bald Man seized by the Hair of his Head!—Awful State of Dacoitee as described by the Newspapers.

THE Bengal Secretary having thus cleverly manœuvred me out of both the high offices for which I had been nominated by the two most distinguished bodies of the service, the Sudder Court and the Sudder Board, and by these means destroyed my chance, for a time at least, of a Calcutta appointment, I was sent as magistrate to Kishnaghur, in the district of Nudiya, a station some twenty or thirty miles from Calcutta, there to expiate the crimes of my presumptuous opposition to secretariat will, and, as was probably thought, impair my official reputation in a department in which I had had but little practical experience.

The district of Nudiya is one of the most important and interesting in Bengal; its ancient legends abound in sensational historical incidents. The inhabitants consist principally of Mahomedans, among whom is a fair sprinkling of fanatic "Firazees," and Hindoos of all the usual classes and castes. There is also an exceptional number of Protestant Christian converts, a few Roman Catholics, and a small number of the Brahma-sumaj followers.

The district contains several large rivers, of which the Bhagurathee is the principal. These have for years past taxed the skill of British engineers to keep the navigation open.

There is little or no irrigation, as there are no descents or rapids capable of being used for machinery.

As in most Indian villages there are several ancient trees, celebrated by some ancient legend or fable.

Among the places of historical interest is Plassey (so called from the flower of a tree called Palas, *Butea frondosa*), situated on the river Bhagurathee. Dr. Hunter in his statistical history says there were, in 1801, 3,000 trees of Clive's famous mango grove still remaining, but only one now survives the ravages of the river and of time. It is the one under which a general of the Nawab who fell in battle was buried.

This tree and a few dilapidated huts are all that remain of the celebrated battle-field; it is still held sacred by the Mahomedans.

Nudiya contains six towns, each with more than two thousand inhabitants.

Kishnaghur, or more properly spelt, Krishnaghur, is the principal town, the head-quarters of the district,

containing, according to Dr. Hunter, 7,000 houses, and a population of 26,750.

To this station I at once went, my wife, at the request of her brothers, remaining in Calcutta until I could make arrangements for our residence.

Until this was accomplished I stayed with Mr. Ogilvie, the collector, a kind and hospitable gentleman, who had held the appointment for many years, not being particularly troubled with ambition. When household matters were arranged my wife joined me, and I entered at once upon my duties.

The few months during which I had officiated at Howrah formed the only period of my career in which I had devoted myself to magisterial duties, and the expectation was not, perhaps, unnatural, that the charge of a district like that of Kishnaghur, always notorious for the prevalence of crime and outrage, might end in failure, and justify the opposition to my appointment in a post which would have placed me above so many of my compeers.

But this sinister anticipation was not destined to be fulfilled. Directly I joined my appointment I set myself enthusiastically to work to falsify all such predictions, and as my time was principally devoted to my official duties, which, as will be seen, were of no ordinary kind, I fear this chapter must once more be devoted to "shop," though not altogether uninteresting, and I am fain to hope that the exceptional condition of affairs with which I had to deal will prevent the subject from proving as dry and dull as it usually is.

Before I proceed to a narrative of my own efforts to suppress the terrible crime of dacoity for which the

district of Nuddea had been for years past notorious, I will briefly mention that in the year to which I refer, the attention of Government was directed to the introduction of some reform in the criminal jurisdiction of the country, and I, among other magistrates, was called upon to offer my advice and suggestions on the subject.

As the question was a highly important one, I entered into it at some length, and have annexed a copy of my letter.

"No. 141.

"From the Magistrate of Zillah Nuddea to the Registrar to the Presidency Court of Nizamut Adawlut, Fort William.

"Sir, "22nd April 1845.

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your circular letter of the Sudder Court, No. 9, bearing date the 28th February 1845, with its enclosure, and beg herewith to submit my sentiments on the subject under discussion.

"It is no longer a question, that the present system of criminal judicature is a failure. The fact is on record; would that it were not written in the hearts of a suffering people!

"Under the Moslem rule, the native was accustomed to a simple but prompt system of jurisprudence; this we have displaced, and substituted a complicated and cumbrous machinery. We have, as it were, taken away their rice and dhall, and forced on their rude stomachs truffles and perigord pie.

"The Government of 1793, forming an imperfect judgment on ill-digested materials, and misguided by an appearance of anarchy in a country just recovering from the throes of internal distraction, seems to have concluded that the people were destitute of all capacity for self-government. More patient reflection might have taught that where there was wealth, populous towns, cultivated arts, and social ingenuity, the elements, if not the essentials, of good government were present. They might thus have preserved, instead of destroying, a system which, with all its imperfections, was eminently adapted to the peculiar character of

a peculiar people, and been saved from the honest but fatal error of establishing one which, with all its abstract excellencies, is utterly inappropriate.

"But it is useless now to regret the past. The point is to improve the present system.

"The two principal defects of the judiciary scheme now in force are to be found (1st) in the vagueness and uncertainty of the law; (2nd) in the machinery of the courts. The first is not now on the *tapis*; the second is before us.

"Over-estimating the efficacy of British character, the Government placed a magistrate in the centre of a vast district, dreaming that the effulgence of his presence would, like the sun, scatter rays of light on all around; but, alas! they environed him with a host of satellites, who, instead of reflecting, have intercepted the radiance of his beams.

"Isolated by position, habits, and tongue, the magistrate was still further segregated from the people by a crowd of needy and voracious underlings. His office was overloaded with complicated forms, and choked with cumbrous records; and what is the result?

"The sword of justice has been wrested from his hand, and the bright blade is dimmed; the vast engine of which he ought to be the mover is dragged (like the car of Juganath) by an obscure multitude, and many are the victims crushed beneath the wheels. The magistrate, as if touched by the wand of Comus, is as a 'rooted statue chained up in alabaster'; or if he moves, it is but as the puppet Punch—at the pleasure of an unseen hand.

"To those who judge of the state of India from a smooth and seemly surface, from ruled tabularies and well-ordered figures, this picture will appear over-stated. To those who are contented with a fair and a goodly show on paper, a nicely adjusted balance of acquittals and convictions, who are satisfied when, in a district like Kishnaghur, the yearly return exhibits 6 Dacoities and 12 thefts of cattle! this description will appear hyperbolical and extravagant. '*Atqui sic habet.*'

"The great object now is to relieve the magistrate from all and several the incumbrances and trammels which neutralize his authority, and nullify every effort of his mind.

"To accomplish this purpose no expedient could well be devised

more effectual than the appointment, as contemplated, of well-paid and trustworthy officers throughout each jurisdiction; but to render the relief which would thus be afforded to the magistrate as complete as possible, it appears essentially necessary first to curtail and simplify the proceedings in all judicial trials. With this view I would suggest that in all cases of assault or petty theft, no other record whatever be kept than that proposed in the 6th paragraph of the letter from the Secretary to Government, viz. the entry into a book (kept for the special purpose, and drawn up with proper headings) of a concise abstract of each case, with the punishment awarded. These books should be the same in form and plan throughout the country; should be kept with the utmost care and precision, and the entry should be invariably made in the officer's own hand, at the time of decision. I fully agree with the opinion expressed in the above paragraph of the Secretary's letter, and I can conceive no more ready and effectual test of the qualification of a magisterial officer than such a book would afford. As this prompt and simple method of decision would bring the merits of each case at once before the immediate cognizance of the presiding officer, and the statement, whether of prosecutor, witnesses, or defendants, would be heard and digested by him at once, without being filtered through the muddy channel of a Mohurrir's pen, I conceive that the chances of correct decision would be incalculably increased, and that the rights of appeal in all petty cases might be entirely abolished. If the deciding officer is at all qualified for his duties (and that those who are hereafter appointed will be so I cannot dare to doubt), the chances of any gross misdecision, at least with respect to matters of fact, are small.

"The benefit of appeal is uncertain and contingent, amounting at the most to an additional chance of accuracy. The evil is palpable and immediate. The efficiency of the court is impeded, the path of justice clogged, litigiousness encouraged, and the rich and powerful are enabled to starve their opponents into capitulation, or to ruin them by delay. The Court of First Instance is better qualified to judge of evidence taken before it than the Appellate Court, and the appeal therefore lies to a higher court in *name*, but in *fact* to a lower one. On legal points the deputy magistrate and the magistrate should be required to

specify in his sentence *the law* under which it is passed, and the facts which bring the case under that law. A copy of this would enable the Appellate Court to form an immediate judgment on the correctness, or otherwise, of the sentence. I would then abolish all appeals, whether as to law or fact, in all petty cases.

"I would allow an appeal to lie from the deputy magistrate to the magistrate or judge in heinous and important cases, on points of law only.

"I would allow no appeal from the magistrate, but discretionary power I would give both to the magistrate and the judge to suspend the sentence of the lower court in any case, if on revision it appears manifestly unjust; pending a reference to the higher court respectively. Under such a system I feel sure that the few cases in which error of judgment, mistake of facts, or misplaced trust of evidence may entail injury, positive or negative, on individuals, will be more than counterbalanced by the promptness, efficiency, and superior accuracy of the judgment given, while the relief to the suitors themselves from the delay, vexation, and expense arising from protracted litigation, will fall like dew from heaven on the great body of the people. But as regards the deputy magistrates, all will depend on the efficiency and closeness of the magistrate's superintendence. This must be the energising principle of this system, circulating throughout every vein and artery, and giving life and vigour to every part.

"Relieved himself from the multitudinous details and the wearying minutes of an over-burthened office, extricated from the toils and trammels of the harpey crew who now prey on the vitals of the people, with more of the dignity of a magistrate, and less of the drudgery of a clerk, he may now (when the proposed improvements are fully carried out) at length realise the object of his appointment, and, by the proper and unfettered direction of the energies of an upright and well-educated mind, may bring some measures of blessing and protection to the millions under his sway.

"I would venture here to take the opportunity of offering some remarks on another point which, as bearing closely on the improvements now suggested, may not be considered undeserving of consideration.

"If the proposed simplification of procedure is carried out, the

office of a magistrate will afford a very different spectacle from that which is now exhibited: the whole brood of greedy underlings will disappear; with them it is to be hoped will, partially at least, abscond the goodly company of Mokhtars who now pollute the atmosphere of every court, and in place of the tortuous procedure which now drags its slow length along the poisonous atmosphere of the cutcherry, vigour and promptitude, and, greatest of all blessings, *speedy justice* will be administered.

"I would strongly suggest that in furtherance of this desirable object some measures be adopted to curtail and regulate the petitions of litigant parties.

"The writing of petitions now affords a livelihood to many a hungry hanger-on of the court, who is paid so much for the job.

"An ignorant old woman has had a slap on the face. In the first heat of anger she puts her case into the hands of a petition-writer, who embellishes the grievance with a train of horrors. The smack is converted into a violent assault by thirty men with sticks and stones! She is, by the graphic imagery of her writer, 'maimed and nearly murdered, left for dead, and only recovered by the assiduity of her attendant handmaids,' who surrounded her as the Trojans did the fainting Andromache:

> 'Around a train of weeping sisters stand,
> To raise her sinking with assistant hands,
> Scarce from the verge of death recall'd again,
> She faints, or but recovers to *complain*.'

She has with difficulty 'evaded the pursuit of her blood-thirsty enemies,' and escaped to lay her case and life at the foot of the magistrate! The petition generally concludes that clothes, lotah, &c., have been stolen *ad infinitum*.

"This may appear to be a trifling matter, but it is fraught with evil consequences.

"In the first place it introduces a system of exaggeration and lying, which of itself is a monstrous evil; secondly, it perplexes the court, which can only with difficulty discover the real gist of the complaint; thirdly, time is lost in listening to a hyperbolical rhodomontade, containing perhaps one word only of truth, and the unhappy accused, himself charged with an *olla podrida* of misdemeanours, of which (saving the said smack) he is ignorant

and innocent, naturally returns the salute with an equally confused and exaggerated counter-statement.

"The remedy for this evil, which every magistrate must have felt, would not be difficult. It would be very easy to have a given number of petition-writers attached to the court, with regulated fees. Forms for every species of plaint might be established, and no petition should be received unless written according to the prescribed form, or with such modifications as the peculiarities of the case might justify.

"Perhaps a still better plan would be to have stamped papers with printed forms of plaints, leaving names and dates only to be filled up. This device would lower the price of justice to the poor suitor, who has now to pay four annas in addition to the value of stamp. This point has before been noticed by a great authority in the sketch of a proposed reform of the Mofussil courts submitted to Parliament by Sir Hyde East. He says:—

"'But a precise charge in writing to be preferred by the accuser is never to be omitted, and the substantial form of the English indictment (freed from its local peculiarities and technicality) has the pre-eminent merit of simplifying every charge, and rendering it single and distinct. As the law has been, and it may be still is, administered in the Mofussil courts, the charge is most general and multifarious, so that the accused cannot know from thence what he is called upon to answer, and a man may be convicted of an offence quite distinct from what he supposed. This leads to excession, perjury, and injustice.'

"The system of 1793 was like the slow coach of the same era; with the proposed changes it will resemble the steam train of 1845. The pace will, at least, be better; whether the accommodation will be improved remains to be seen. One thing is certain, that unless the engineers are careful, the passengers will suffer more than before.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,
"Your most obedient servant,
(Signed) "W. Taylee,
"Magistrate."

Although some matter-of-fact critics afterwards told me that I was considered to have treated the matter in

some parts in too light or facetious a strain, my suggestions were, I know, received with approbation, and as the slight introduction of the comic in reality tended to direct more attention to the abuses which were described, I never regretted the irregular admixture.

For the benefit of those who care sufficiently for the subject, I have here transcribed my entire letter, comic passages, and all. I will at the same time mention that my portraiture of the "old woman with a smack on her face," was specially suggested to me by a ludicrous incident which occurred when, as an assistant, I was conducting a criminal case in Cuttack, several years before.

A man had prosecuted another for assault, and the petition which he presented had entered into all the hyperbolical details which I have described; among other horrors was introduced the statement (never omitted in such documents), viz. that the Defendant had "seized him by the hair of his head" (mooee sir'um girift), before proceeding to other awful acts of violence. As he was giving his deposition on oath in confirmation of this piteous narrative, I observed that he was entirely bald, without a scrap of hair in any corner of his cranium. I therefore put to him the question, in a serious voice, "Are all the statements in your petition, true?" On his answering confidently in the affirmative, I then said, "Are you sure that the Defendant did seize the hair of your head?" The fellow said "Yes, my lord," without hesitation. "Do you say that on your oath?" There was something in my tone, or in the looks of some of those standing near him, which suddenly attracted his

THE BALD-HEADED PLAINTIFF.

"*Airy Nothings.*"

Assistant Magistrate.—Will you swear positively that they seized you by the hair of your head? (*Sensation in the Court.*)

[*To face p.* 265.

attention, for just as he opened his mouth to answer, he stopped, raised his hand, and passed it slowly over his head with an air of bewilderment, which was not diminished when he perceived a broad grin on all the faces around him. I told him to walk down, with difficulty restraining my laughter, adding, that as he had told and caused to be written a deliberate lie, I dismissed his case, and recommended him to let his hair grow before he presented another petition of personal grievance.

The vivid remembrance of this ludicrous scene was in my mind when I brought the subject of exaggerated petitions to the notice of Government; whether it tended to the reform which was subsequently introduced, I cannot say.

And now, to give the reader some faint idea of the appalling extent which dacoity had attained in past days, in the special district of which I am writing, I am tempted to quote at length an article which I communicated to the *Mofussilite*, shortly after my appointment:—

"Year after year have the struggling rays of civilisation and intelligence broken in upon us. Already are suttee, infanticide, and slavery, as tales that are told, and Thuggee is in the grasp of death. Well and faithfully, through good and ill report, with occasional backslidings of timidity or prejudice, still well and nobly has this work been done, and imperishable is the monument already raised to the British name.

"But how much yet remains!

"Infanticide, slavery, and suttee were open and avowed delusions, and being openly grappled, fell, as needs they must. The struggle was as that of darkness with light—of 'Apollyon' with 'Christian.'

"Thuggee, too, though secret in working, was a system

organised, compact, and continuous, and thus, when detected, the remedy was obvious and feasible. Every link of this cold-blooded confederation was concatenated with the others, and thus when one link was touched, the rest was secured; and every successive blow told, and will tell, till the whole is destroyed.

"The conquest over these monstrous evils has been decisive and easy, but there are others which it is far more difficult to uproot, which, though not presenting so obvious and palpable a front, are not, on that account, the less formidable in their nature, or the less destructive in their effects upon society.

"The first and foremost of these is Dacoity. Awful as is the Thuggee trade in all its parts, in its silent association, its deliberate and callous cruelty, and its extensive ravages, yet its effects on society are trifling when compared with those of Dacoity. Thuggee brings no terror to the domestic hearth. The victims of the handkerchief are travellers, and the murderers are of another district; the secrecy of the deed, the uncertainty of the wayfarer's fate; all these circumstances, though heightening the picturesque horror (so to speak) of the system, when viewed as a whole, serve but to lessen the ill consequences to the community.

Dacoity, on the other hand, when prevalent to any extent, and unchecked by detection and punishment, strikes at the very root of all social prosperity and comfort; the security of home is lost, the social tie is snapped; confidence, the very solder and cement of society, is destroyed. A man cannot trust his brother, nor rely upon the wife of his bosom. No man knows, when he lays his weary head to rest at the close of a toilsome day, that he may not, before the morning sun rise, behold his house rifled, his wife violated, and his hard-earned property scattered to the winds.

"And Mr. Dampier tells us that Dacoity has, in 1844, generally increased. We have collected a few materials from which we may furnish our readers with some of the horrors of this crime, as well as lay before them a narrative of its rise and progress. The narrative relates principally to Kishnaghur, which may be considered, *par excellence*, the Dacoity district. Nevertheless, we may safely say of every district in which Dacoity prevails,

'Mutato nomine, de te
Fabula narratur.'

"In 1785, Mr. Readfurn was appointed as Judge, Collector, and Magistrate of Kishnaghur. The Dacoits found in him their match, and the history of the next few years evinces how much can be effected by the vigour, judgment, and intelligence of a single man. Mr. Readfurn's administration embraced a period of eight years, viz. from 1785 to 1793. To vigour and energy of mind Mr. Readfurn united great strength and activity of body. He frequently pursued and captured the most desperate Dacoits in person, and succeeded, by his resolute and determined vigour, in almost suppressing for a time the outrages which had so long harassed the district.

"But the flame was smothered, not extinguished. In the fifteen years which succeeded Mr. Readfurn's golden rule, it burst forth with redoubled fury. Relieved from the restraint of that vigorous arm which had curbed their violence and avenged their crimes, the Dacoits recommenced their operations, not only to a greater extent, but with a savageness and barbarity unknown.

"As if anxious to make up the lee-way in their horrid career, they crowded all conceivable atrocities into each Dacoity, and most ruinous were the consequences of their depredations.

"In 1793, after Mr. Readfurn left the district, the Courts of Circuit commenced their sittings. Formal and protracted judiciary proceedings were substituted for the prompt and summary trials of Mr. Readfurn's time, and brought with them the usual tricks and chicanery. Schemes for defence were devised, and digested, and that most efficacious of all pleas, the *alibi* (well defined to be 'a lie by' which many a rogue escapes justice) brought into effectual play.

"With time and leisure to concoct the means of exculpation, with friends, relations, and dependants obedient to their nod, aided by the terror of their name and the dread of their vengeance, the Dacoits found little difficulty in concocting a defence sufficient to secure their acquittal before judges who regulated their proceedings according to the artificial rules of modern jurisprudence.

"Brow-beaten and intimidated openly by the prisoners and their friends in open court, terrified by their threats in secret, harassed and disheartened by expense and delay, and foreseeing with horror the vengeance destined for them, the witnesses for

the prosecution gave faltering and unwilling evidence, while the prisoners' friends, under no fear of consequences, and emboldened by the secret influence of corrupt umlah, swore boldly, and without hesitation, to falsehood. With appropriate cunning they soon learnt the circumstances which weighed with the circuit judges as exculpatory pleas. A nominal character for respectability, the possession of a plough, a field, and yoke of oxen, ancient feuds with the zemindars, or the prosecutors; all and each of these artifices seem to have been successively and successfully adopted. The most notorious ringleaders were constantly acquitted. The Dacoits triumphed and were merry, while the magistrate was in despair.

"The frequency and facility of escape inspired the Dacoits with confidence and courage. They laughed at the sessions trials, and in ridicule called the sittings 'holiday time.'

"They took upon themselves openly the protection of certain villages, compelled the inhabitants to engage them as Pykes. They not only were notorious, but courted notoriety. They walked abroad in open day, and exacted the homage and obedience of the awe-struck people!

"(The mistress of the celebrated chief, named Balram, was, from her connexion with her brutal paramour, such an object of terror, that when she visited the Ghaut to bathe, the spectators were made to avert their eyes, and flee from her sacred presence.)

"The same misplaced levity and inappropriate scrupulousness, which gave confidence and daring to these hardened bandits, discouraged in proportion the suffering people, after giving reluctant evidence at the hazard of their lives. After enduring the inconvenience and expense of protracted absence from their homes, they found that the purpose for which they had undergone such danger and endured such hardship was frustrated. The robbers were acquitted and let loose to prey upon society, and to wreak double vengeance on those who had accused them.

"No wonder that the miserable beings were unwilling to come forward. No wonder that there was heard so much of the apathy of the natives, and their reluctance to prosecute!

"Apathy, indeed! To be first robbed by Dacoits, then by the Darogah and his myrmidons, then by the umlah of the court, to be dragged from home (if a home was left to them) to dance

attendance on the magistrates' court for weeks and months, and only to be released in time to be handed up again before the judge; and after all to have the first aggressors let loose again to complete the work of ruin and desolation!

"When matters arrived at this crisis, the respectable inhabitants of the district, despairing of protection from a system which punished the innocent and screened the guilty, bethought themselves of other means of defence.

"The village Pykes of the district were (if not themselves Dacoits) connected with them through interest, or cowed by fear. In 1801 the householders invited from Burdwan and Beerbhoom, the tribes of Chowar Pykes—men famous for integrity and valour; and these they appointed to guard the villages.

"For a time these men maintained the character which had led to their employment, but after awhile, seduced by the prospects of gain, and the enticements of their hardened associates, they formed a coalition with the district Pykes.

"From this period Dacoity assumed a more blood-thirsty and savage character.

"The most frightful and diabolical outrages that imagination can conceive, were perpetrated in open day; and a scene of misery and desolation ensued which beggars all description.

"The Dacoits about this period appear to have attained a perfect system of organisation. They had gangs, with a regular gradation of commanders, from the Gautee Pykes to the Sirdar or ringleader. Divisions of the district were allotted to respective gangs, and on the death or capture of a leader his place was instantly filled by a relation, or another was elected in his stead.

"The nature of the Dacoities of this period will be better known by a few specimens. We can vouch for their authenticity.

"One of the most terrible cases of barbarity ever recorded in the pages of truth or fiction, was perpetrated by Buddeah, a notorious Sirdar.

"Some inhabitants of Krishnagunge, a village in the immediate vicinity of the station of Kishnaghur, were supposed to have afforded aid in the apprehension of one of Buddeah's men.

"Reckless and inflated with revenge, and utterly despising the power, or rather the weakness, of the Courts, Buddeah resolved to strike terror into the hearts of all who should presume to

thwart his career. He assembled his entire gang, and surrounded the village in the dead of night. Their approach was unobserved by the inhabitants, who lay wrapt in the depth of Eastern sleep. At a signal given, the Dacoits lighted their torches and rushed into the village; and from their houses, with savage shouts, were dragged the shrieking women. Their piercing screams were stifled in the foul embraces of the brutal gang, and every female of the village was violated.

"Notwithstanding the horrors of this barbarous outrage, the numbers of the sufferers, and the indelible disgrace which the violation of the wretched women brought upon the families—such was the fear of the chief Buddeah, and the dread of his revenge, that even after he was apprehended and was in Mr. Elliott's custody, not a soul dared to give evidence against him!

"It was a constant practice in those days, though it has since been discontinued, to carry off the wives of the villagers, and sometimes to detain them as long as personal charms, or other motives, afforded any inducement.

"We cannot refrain from giving an anecdote connected with this custom.

"Bhugeeruth, a celebrated Sirdar, carried off the wife of one Kalachund Ghose. Kalachund had two children, a girl and a boy. The girl was taken with the mother, the boy was left with the father. Bhugeeruth was subsequently seized and brought to trial before Mr. Elliott. His too faithful mistress, with that devotion which women so often have displayed, the more intense as its object is worthless, followed her paramour into the station, and obtained access to his cell.

"The usual arts were practised to purchase the release of the Dacoit, and to aid their resources for bribing the umlah; and the mother, at the instigation of Bhugeeruth, sold her child to a woman of bad character for sixteen rupees. The father, when he heard of this, foreseeing the ruin and degradation of his child, and the disgrace which threatened his name and family, appeared before the magistrate and complained. He obtained an immediate audience. His piteous tale, poured out from a full and bleeding heart, received instant credence, and all the parties concerned were ordered in.

"The court was unusually full. The cries and lamentations of

the wretched father had attracted the attention and interest of the crowd which are always loitering round the purlieus of a cuchery.

"While the man thus stood before the magistrate in a state of indescribable agitation, holding his little son by the hand, and refusing to be comforted, the wife and the little girl (who had been taken by the magistrate's order from the woman who purchased her) entered the court.

"The scene that ensued was pathetic in the extreme. The innocent children rushed each into the arms of the parent from whom they had been so long separated. The father clasped the little girl to his breast with convulsive joy; and the abandoned mother could not refuse the proffered embraces of her once-loved boy.

"The woman, moved in spite of herself by the mighty power of a mother's love, and smitten with the pangs of sudden and irresistible remorse, fell at the feet of her injured husband, and prayed to be restored to his protection; but this better feeling soon passed away, and although the magistrate made every arrangement for her restoration to the privileges of her caste and comforts of her home, she again quitted her husband's roof, and, abandoning both her children, threw herself into the arms of her seducer."

CHAPTER XXI.

KISHNAGHUR.

Arrival at Kishnaghur. — My Proceedings for Suppression of Dacoity.—Detection of Darogah.—Participation of Amlah discovered.—Assistance received from Various Quarters.—Native Christians.—Indigo-planters.—Letter from John Lowis.—Public Approval of my Efforts by Superintendent of Police.—C. Davidson, the Commissioner, visits Kishnaghur. — His Letter to the Governor-General's Private Secretary.—Charles Hardinge's Reply.—My Appointment as Postmaster-General.—Memorabilia of Kishnaghur Residents.—Sir W. Jones' House.—Peter of the Dâk Bungalow.—Pierce Taylor's Latin Ode, with Translation.—The "Dâk Bungalow Fowl" Quotation.—Culinary Excellence of the Chicken Cutlet.

THIS was the district which was now placed under my charge, and though the diabolical horrors above depicted had been toned down, the awful crime of dacoity was still rife, and, as will be seen in my narrative, and the official reports of the Superintendent of Police, I discovered that the magistrate's own ministerial subordinates, as well as the police darogahs and constables, were themselves in league with the

robbers, aiding their enormities and sharing their plunder. Having found at Howrah the great advantage of my special band of picked burkandazes, to be always ready at a moment's notice, I immediately organised a similar select body to be located in my own grounds, with a jemadar at their head. At Howrah, where I had principally to counteract the rough and ready outrages of the larky or drunken sailor, I chose my guard for their size and strength; at Kishnaghur, where I had to discover the schemes and counteract the action of experienced robbers, my selection was based upon intellectual rather than bodily attributes.

Moral elements, I regret to say, were altogether absent: for occasional honesty I provided appropriate recompense, but to ensure general co-operation, I trusted to filthy lucre. I chose, therefore, a set of the most astute and practised blackguards, on the principle of "set a thief to catch a thief," and my expectations were more than answered.

It may not be uninteresting to point out the means by which I succeeded (as I shall show by other evidence than my own) in this important crusade. In some instances, indeed, I detected not only dacoities which had occurred during my own incumbency, but even years before, bringing the culprits to justice, and, occasionally, even recovering the stolen property.

In ordinary cases, a magistrate has to rely entirely for his intelligence on the police. The darogah, or head constable, at the central station, daily submits his reports of all occurrences, whether in the town itself, or the immediate neighbourhood. Separate reports are

sent in from the outlying thannahs by the police there stationed.

Obviously the magistrate is at the mercy of these reports, and, if concealment is practised, he has little chance of discovering the truth.

The darogah and his belted myrmidons are the terror of the village in or near which the thannah or police station is situated, and woe be to the unhappy man who attracts their suspicion or incurs their displeasure.

This glaring defect in the system I realised at once, and set my wits to work to discover means for counteracting it.

There were at Kishnaghur several well-known indigo-planters, gentlemen of distinguished ability and irreproachable characters, and, as I always made a point of cultivating the acquaintance of such residents of the district, I very soon had established amicable relations with two or three among them—a gentleman of the name of Furlong especially.

It struck me that if these gentlemen chose to co-operate with me, as far as the supply of independent information was concerned, it would be a great assistance, and, though others suggested that such assistance might be open to exception, as being occasionally tinged with the spirit of local antagonism, I banished all such unworthy suspicions and solicited their aid.

There was another body also at Kishnaghur, from whom I obtained similar assistance, viz. the native christians, who were numerous and respectable.

All I asked from these two sources was early intimation of any dacoities or serious robberies which might come to their knowledge, with any further information

that might be useful in leading to detection of the guilty parties.

The effect of these triple sources of information from planters, Christians, and my own blackguards, proved invaluable, and I will here give a curious instance.

One day I received intimation from a native Christian that a terrible dacoity had taken place the night before, in which the proprietor of the house had been seriously wounded, in a village not far from the station. No report had yet come from the town darogah, so I held no communication with him, but at once despatched several of my body-guard to the spot, with instructions to ascertain all particulars, and if anyone was found wounded, to bring him at once in a "dhooly" (litter) to my house.

After some hours, during all of which time I heard nothing from my immaculate station police, my men returned, bringing with them an unfortunate old man who had been almost burnt to death. They told me all the particulars: it had been a serious and savage affair, and so near Kishnaghur itself, that the central police must have been aware of it.

All that could be done for the wounded man was done. He remained in a side room of my house, and after a short time, as I expected, the town darogah came in with his usual report; among other things, he informed me, in a casual and indifferent tone, that a trivial burglary had taken place (naming the village where the dacoity had occurred), and that inquiries were being conducted on the spot. I then asked him, with apparent indifference, a few questions, which he answered without

hesitation. "It was merely an ordinary burglary, my lord; very little property stolen," &c. &c.

I then asked specially, "Are you sure no one was injured."

"Oh dear no," he said with an oily smile, "no one." As he uttered these words, I rose, and slowly opened the door of the adjoining room. There lay the wretched householder in irrepressible agony, giving the lie to the scoundrel darogah by his groans!

Had it not been for the private information I had received, the matter would have passed by as a trifling every-day occurrence; as it was, the recreant darogah himself saw the necessity of strenuous exertions in hopes of saving himself. They were crowned with success, the principal men of the gang were seized and convicted, and the roasted victim ultimately recovered.

I need scarcely say that this was the last service which this darogah was called upon to perform.

The case convinced me of the infinite importance of independent information, and the appalling deception of mere official reports.

It would be tedious to relate the numerous other instances which tended to establish this fact, but I may say with some satisfaction that, as I kept all my extra sources of information secret, my police became ultimately so bewildered that, for fear of unknown consequences, they were for the first time in their lives not only punctual but *true*, and the dacoits trembled.

The most strange discoveries were subsequently made, and information was given which put me on the track of my own serishthadar, a man who had been for years the head ministerial officer of the magistrate's court!

Before anything tangible was discovered, but with a shrewd forecast of what might come to light, he requested leave of absence that he might make a pilgrimage to Mecca. The leave was granted; whether he went to Mecca or not, I never saw him more, and afterwards found that he and my nazir (court sheriff) were in league with all the dacoits of the district, and that a splendid house, which the latter had built from the profits of his copartnership, was devoted principally to the receipt and concealment of stolen property. *He* also felt uncomfortable after the discoveries described, and considered a pilgrimage desirable; he obtained leave of absence, and never showed his face again.

As I have, with the pardonable egotism of an autobiographer, said so much in self-commendation, I will, in continuation of this narrative and in confirmation of what I have said of my proceedings, subjoin some notes and extracts in connexion with the subject. But I will first give the copy of a letter written shortly after my disappointment in Calcutta, and after I had been a few weeks in Kishnaghur; it is from the well-known and distinguished civilian, the late John Lowis, then a member of the Sudder Board, and was written to console me for the shabby treatment which I had experienced.

"Do you ever read in Thomas Carlyle? He has a firm hearty trustfulness that 'truth will prevail,' and 'true things stand at the latter end.' His motto is, 'Work, and despair not.' I often refresh myself out of him, but I have no such interesting work as dacoit-hunting now-a-days."

"Do you see *Punch?* The great event in Calcutta is the reconciliation of P—— and H——. A recent picture of the reconciliation of Punch with Louis Phillipe will give you a clue to the association

of ideas in my head between P—— and H——. His star—H——'s not Punch's alas! (for Punch is a very honest fellow)—is still in the ascendant, and his small, jealous, detractive spirit will, I fear, continue like a wet blanket to damp the best energies of the service. Never mind, better things will come; and again I say, 'Work, and despair not.'"

Such a letter among many others of the same tenor afforded me no trifling satisfaction, and, while the sympathy exhibited saved me from the evil effects not unfrequently caused by the consciousness of wrong, it encouraged me to "work on," and thus led to the gratifying approval of my labours as expressed in the letters subjoined.

The following are extracts from the reports of the Superintendent of Police, Mr. W. Dampier, for 1845 :—

"Mr. Loch was in charge of the district until the 20th November, when Mr. Tayler assumed charge. Mr. W. Tayler was surprised at the dacoities which immediately occurred after his arrival; but he set himself to the task most energetically to put them down, and root out the bands of lawless characters combined to perpetrate these offences, in which since the close of the year he has effected much towards his purpose."

Again :—

"Mr. W. Tayler, whilst in charge of the district, traced out a systematic concealment of dacoities by the police and the people, and through the exertions of Darogahs Moonshee Wasif-ood-deen and Attar Ali, established the participation of the police of several thannahs in this practice. I was obliged therefore to recommend the grant of a superannuation pension for the Darogah of Sookh Saugor, whose advanced age rendered him unfit for the active duties of his office, and to remove two other Darogahs from the police. Mr. W. Tayler by his exertions in these cases put a considerable check on the crime of dacoity and re-established confidence among the people."

Paragraph 36 :—

"Mr. W. Tayler was magistrate up to the 15th July. The energy, talent, and activity displayed by this officer imparted great vigour to the proceedings of the police, and he put by his measures great check on dacoities and the concealment of crime."

These testimonials, from an officer of Mr. Dampier's ability and experience, will speak for themselves.

The following letter, also, written by one of the most able and influential indigo-planters in the district, will show what the feeling and opinion of the planters were; it was written with reference to a demi-official letter which the Civil and Sessions Judge, Mr. Bruce, had sent to Government, begging that, in consideration of the benefits I had rendered in the suppression of dacoity, my services might, if possible, be retained in the district, on a salary equal to the office of Postmaster-General to which I had just been nominated :—

"My dear Tayler,

"I earnestly hope Halliday will comply with the request of the judge, and that we may have your services a little longer in this district, for without intending a compliment I must say I have never known the police in a more efficient state than it now is, and I am sure your longer residence at Kishnaghur would be a very great blessing.

"Yours very sincerely,

(Signed) "James Forlong."

These gratifying official and non-official encomiums were not exactly the result anticipated by my opponent, and the following additional testimony still less so. Some months after my appointment Mr. I. H. Davidson, the Commissioner of the Division, paid an official visit to Kishnaghur, and after witnessing what I had done,

and hearing from others the general feeling of satisfaction caused by my proceedings, voluntarily wrote the following letter to Mr. Hardinge, then the private secretary to the Governor-General, now Lord Hardinge:—

"My dear Hardinge,

"I see by the papers that the collectorship of the Twenty-four Pergannahs has become vacant, and I write to request that Mr. William Tayler, the magistrate of this station, may be nominated to the vacancy. Mr. Tayler will, I know, be glad to obtain the appointment, but it is possible that the secretary to the late Deputy-Governor of Bengal may not bring his claims to notice, under the idea that his 'love for the fine arts may interfere with the drudgery' of a collector's duties!

"For my part I consider that an accomplished gentleman is always the best qualified to conduct the duties of an office, and as the collectorship has suffered extremely from having been placed in the charge of a succession of dullards, I shall be rejoiced if it can be now given to Mr. Tayler.

"I am not afraid that Mr. Tayler's accomplishments will interfere with his duty; indeed, I consider the best part of Mr. Halliday's own character is his love for the *big fiddle*.

"I am, &c. &c.,

(Signed) "J. N. Davidson,

"Commissioner."

Annexed is the answer written by Mr. Charles (the present Viscount) Hardinge:—

"My dear Davidson,

"Mr. Beresford had been appointed to the Twenty-four Pergannahs before the receipt of your letter from Kishnaghur. I may tell you that Sir Henry is no less anxious for Mr. Tayler's promotion in the service than the latter's own friends can be, and will, I am sure, be happy to have an opportunity of forwarding his wishes, as he has understood that he is a man of talent and ability. In the present case Mr. Beresford is both senior to Mr. Tayler, and has officiated as collector of the

Yours sincerely
George Fillier

Twenty-four Pergannahs eight or ten months with satisfaction to the Government. His claims, therefore, are not to be overlooked, and I do not see that Mr. Tayler can complain of the selection that has been made.

"Yours sincerely,

(Signed) "C. HARDINGE."

It may be easily imagined what special gratification these results afforded me.

The official commendations recorded by the Superintendent of Police, the special demi-official application by the Judge for my retention in the district, the open demonstration of the respectable inhabitants, the satisfaction of the planters, and last, though not least, the flattering recommendation of the Commissioner of the Division, and the kind expressions of Sir H. Hardinge conveyed through his private secretary,—all these unusual incidents combined to satisfy me of the one fact most valuable to a conscientious public officer, viz that I had *done my duty*, and formed a complete and practical refutation of the ungenerous imputation secretly made to my prejudice, to suit the purpose of an all-powerful but irresponsible Secretary.

Whether the Governor-General ever fully knew the "little game" which had been so cleverly and so dishonestly carried out for my discomfiture the year before, I never knew, though I shrewdly suspected that it was not altogether concealed, as it was the talk of Calcutta for many days, and many of my friends were behind the scenes. I was aware that one of the Governor-General's aide-de-camps at least, Captain Hillyer, knew the whole story.

However this may be, very shortly afterwards I

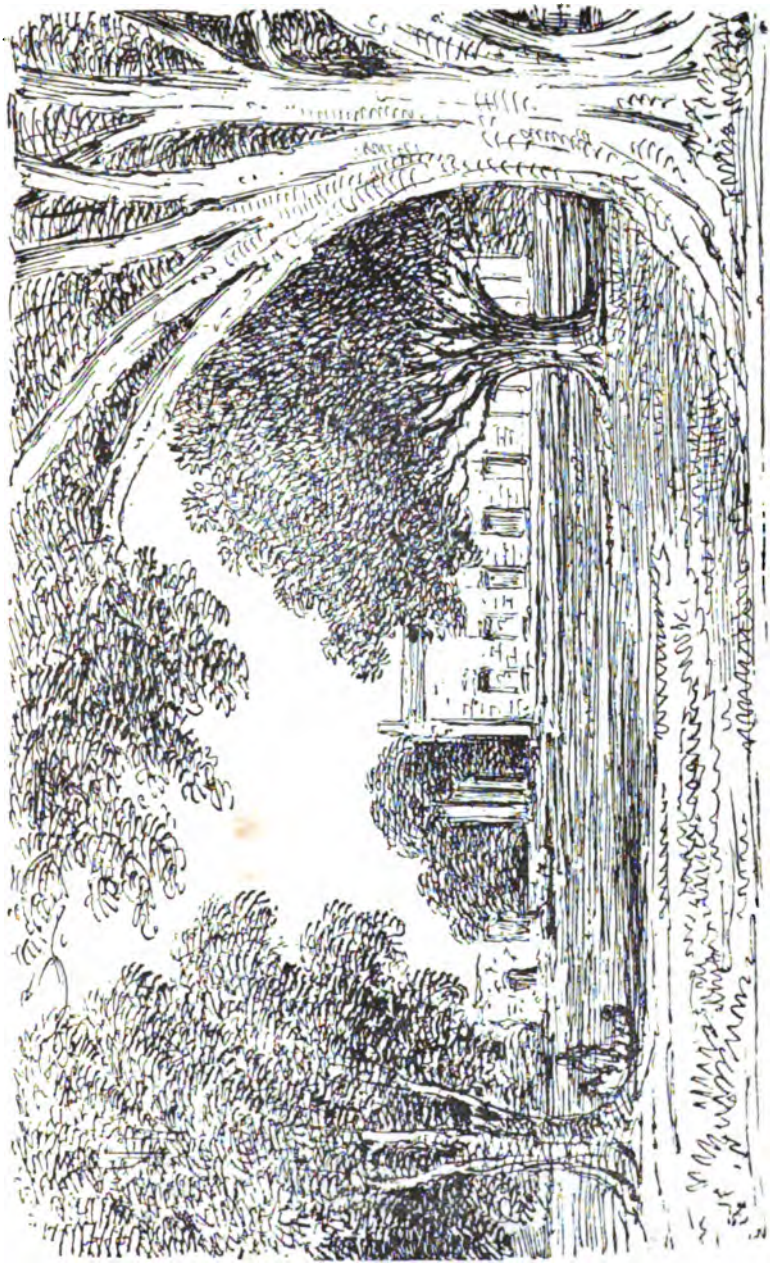
received intimation that I had been appointed Post-master-General of Bengal; and the dacoits, I am fain to hope, rejoiced over my promotion.

During my stay at this station our society was limited. The judge when first we went was Mr. Brown, familiarly named "Jugoo Brown," whom we had known before in our earlier days at Cuttack, a jovial stout gentleman, great judge—at least of horse-flesh—and inimitable amateur cook. Mr. Ogilvie the collector, a fine old man of great age, not remarkable for his official abilities, but a thorough gentleman, who attributed his unfailing health to the daily practise of drinking a small liqueur glass of brandy immediately he awoke, and another directly after breakfast. My wife's nephew Charles (now Sir Charles) Hobhouse, afterwards one of the judges of the High Court, paid us a visit at the out-station of Raneegunge, where my wife and I had our tents pitched in the cold weather, and we immensely enjoyed the rambles, duck-shooting, and other amusements which the place afforded.

Mr. Brown was succeeded, while we were yet there, by Mr. Bruce, the officer who wrote to Government requesting my retention. The other officials remained in *statu quo* till we left the station.

Having completed the official narrative with which this chapter has been principally occupied, I have but little to say on minor matters. We were at Kishnaghur for only eight months, from December to July, and I had no leisure time for sketching.

There is one interesting building, however—interesting not for its appearance, as it is merely a square house with broken windows, but it was the residence of the



HOUSE FORMERLY OCCUPIED BY SIR WILLIAM JONES.

celebrated Sir William Jones, and therefore worthy to be noted.

Kishnaghur was celebrated in former days as the residence of many distinguished men, but the only living

celebrity in our time was "Peter," the superintendent of the Dâk Bungalow.

Some men achieve greatness, some have greatness thrust upon them. How "Peter" obtained his greatness it is not easy to say, but that he was great in his ways is not to be doubted; at all events, he was not like those brave men who lived before Agamemnon, and died without mention for want of a sacred poet, for I have a Latin ode, Horation in its style, solely written in praise and admiration of the hero of the Kishnaghur Dâk Bungalow, which I here subjoin :—

SAPPHIC ODE.

Addressed to Mr. Peter, Cook and Guardian of the Kishnaghur, or Nuddea, Posting Bungalow, in Bengal.

Quisquis, omnino miserandus, atrâ
Per graves horas, agitatus arcâ,
Quæ per Indorum populos, ubique,
Palky vocatur,
Nuddeæ, tandem, tepidæ vireta
Vidit, et vallem casulamque Petri,
Seu per obliquam *Baraset* vehatur,
Seu per *Achanuk*,
Ah! velut portu Melitæ potitus
Nauta, jam fessus rabie notorum,
Gaudiis ridet loca fœta pleno
Corde salutans.
En ferox *dawki* famulos *Jehannum*
Mittit, *authannæ* pretio fugatos,
Sex et ingentes properat per artus
Fundere ghurras.
Tondet et barbam, speculoque vultum
Parvulo gaudet nitidum reflecti,
Vilis et *trunk road* cecidisse toto a
Corpore sordes.

Mox, nitens braccis, humerosque amictus
Candido *clean shirt*, sedet, et beatam
Prandii, *jhut put* venientis, auram
Naribus haurit.
Tum venit, Baccho similis, per herbas,
Afferens risus epulasque, Petrus,
Lautior sponso coquus, et coquorum
Primus in Indis.
Omelet jam jam sapidum, bonumque
Curry bat ponens, stomacho benignum, et
Vim *patatarum*, calidumque *beefsteak*,
Bacon an' eggs que.
Leniter dulces oculos reflectens
Advenæ signum dedit, ille Parthis
Ocior turmis, jaculisve, gratam
Fertur in escam.
Donec, indulgens sibi, lætus ardor
Vincitur tandem, gelidumque *beershraub*
Poculo in Petri micat, ah! Deorum
Nectare majus,
Mittit ingentem subito quietem
Numen, et victi fugiunt dolores,
Clarior meus fit, rapidoque turgent
Sanguine venæ.
Permeat latam faciem bibentis
Lumen auratum reducis juventæ,
Nasus et valdé rubefactus ardet,
Tara ke moffiq.
Adstat en! Petrus, volitante fumo
Dum beat bacco casulam *Manillæ*,
Narrat et nugas, adiposus, alto
Corde cachinnans.
At venit, risu in medio, dolenti
Væ! viatori, male natus, ultrô,
Parvulus, *Dawki* metuend-a servis
Palky parari
Nuntians, tum vox cadit ut misellæ
Virgini, duris ubi natus armis

Sponsus, in pugnas, subitâ tubarum
Voce refertur,
Lingua torpescit misero, viarum
Qui modo oblitus, comitisque curæ,
Corpus et mentem dederat quieti,
Deliciisque.
Sed tamen, promens virides *petarras*,
Atteram accendît gemitu *Manillam*,
Tradit et Petro, geniale donum,
Quinque *rupeyas*.
Hic manu *taccas* quatiens, renidet,
Namque amat mentes generosiores,
Ille, suspirans, iterum tremendâ
Clauditur arcâ.
Dumque mox, dûsrâ in casulâ, senilem
Dentibus, frustrâ, lacerare gallum
Tentat, et fœdæ tepidam lacunæ
Vix bibit undam,
Nuddeæ beershraub, memori, bonumque
Curry bat, cordi subito recurrunt,
Dulcis et Petri celebrare laudes
Gaudet, ut infrâ.
Cum suis vivat, valeatque, Petrus,
Optimæ invictus Casulæ Magister,
Nuddeæ immensum decus, et coquorum,
Primus in Indis.

NOTE.

Palky.—*Lectica*, arcæ elongatæ similis, in quâ viator, supinus jacens, in humeris virorum fertur; Anglicè "a litter."

Casula.—Indicé *bungla*, seu *bungalow*; hospitium Postale.

Baraset.—Loci nomen.

Nuddea.—Idem: nomen alterum ejus *Kishnaghur*.

Achanuk.—Idem: nomen alterum ejus Barrackpore.

Dawki Famuli. — *Dawk*, Anglicè "post"; *Famuli*, Anglicè "bearers"; lecticæ portatores.

Jehannum.—*Gehenna*, Anglicè "h—ll."

Authannæ.—Nummulus Indicus, Anglorum solido pœnê æquus; Angl. "a shilling."

Ghurras.—*Ghurra* est urceus fictilis, in quo lavationis aqua refrigeratur.

Trunk road.—Via media et maxima Indorum quæ a Calcuttâ, usque ad montes Himalayanos, tendit.

Braccæ.—Anglicè, *pants*, sive *breeches.*

Clean Shirt.—Toga virilis Anglorum, lauta.

Jhut put.—Vox indica; "quam celerrimè."

Curry bat.—Dapium Indicorum excellentissima, quæ carne aromatis imbutâ, et butyro confecta, cum oryzâ mista, comeditur.

Omelet.—Sive *omlette*; ovorum intrita in Sartagine frixa.

Patata.—Anglicè "potato," vul. "tatur."

Beefsteak.—Caro bovilla, ex uropygio bestiæ secata, et in carbonibus tosta, cepibus frixis adornata, quæ sinapi imbuta comeditur.

Bacon and Eggs.—Caro adiposa et salsa porcorum, quæ cum ovis frixa comeditur.

Beershraub.—Cerevisia Hodgsoni, aut Allsoppii, aut Bassi.

Tara ke Moffiq.—Sideris instar.

Bacco.—Nicotiana tabacum.

Manilla.—Insula Hispanica, Australasiatica, in quâ nicotiana optima colitur, et paratur.

Male natus Parvulus.—Indicê, "*haramzadah chokra.*"

Petarræ.—Arcæ ferreæ, quadratæ, Stanno indutæ, et viridissime pictæ, compagibus ligneis corroboratæ, quæ, in baculis arundinaceis, chordis canabinis, dupliciter suspensæ, in portatorum humeris Feruntur.

In prædictis arcis viator vestimenta sua, saponem, tabacum, nummos, caligas, et cætera, condit et servat.

Rupeyas.—*Rupeya*, nummus argenteus Indorum, in quo *authannæ* duæ continentur; Anglicè, "*two shillings*," *quinque rupeyas*, ten shillings, ministerii pretium non sternutandum; locuples erat viator noster!

Dusrâ.—Alterâ.

Taccas.—*Rupeyas*, nummos.

Senilis Gallus.—Anglicè et Americè, "*a tough old Rooster.*"

Tepida lacuna.—Anglicè, "a lukewarm tank."

ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE ODE, IN THE SAME METRE, MADE AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE.

Whoso, for long hours, miserably shaken,
Much to be pitied, in a nasty black box,
Which, the whole land o'er, denizens of Ind de-
scribe as a palky,
Nuddea at last sees, 'mid a lot o' gardens,
Pight, in its warm vale, by the cot o' Peter,
Whether askew through Baraset he travels,
Or by Achanuk
(As by mad south winds put about a sailor
Doth on approach delicious to Malta),
With a full heart that domicile of pleasure
Gladly saluteth.
Lo! the post-bearers furiously driving,
With his eight annas, in a heap to Limbo,
Over his nob six very large he dashes
Pots, in a hurry.
Then in his glass exiguous a' shaving,
On a clean phiz luxuriously gazeth,
And on his well washed body, quite relieved from
Dust o' the trunk road.
Next in his pants, and in a snowy clean shirt,
As to his shoulders radiant, he sitteth,
And the quick dinner, with a happy nostril,
Sniffeth a' coming.
O'er the grass grub now, similar to Bacchus,
Peter, all smiles, deliciously beareth,
Than a bridegroom more elegant, o' man cooks
First i' the country.
Lo! a large om'lette by a yellow curry,
Food for all bellies capital, he serveth,
Lots o' prime taturs, wi' a juicy beefsteak,
Bacon an' egg too.
Then to his guest, like telegraph, his eye says,
Gently, "Come on!" who, rapider than arrows
Shot by fierce Parthian fugitives, the *vittles*
Pins in a moment.

Soon as indulgence gradually calmeth
Hunger, and bright ale in a glass o' Peter
Glittereth, ah! more precious, by far, than
Nectar of Ida.
Quickly kind gods give quietude amazing,
Gone is all grief, bliss animates the bosom,
While the full veins, with rosy life inundant,
Merrily tingle.
O'er the broad features o' the happy toper,
Splendid as gold, lights juvenile again come,
And his huge nose, made very ruddy, beameth
Bright as a planet.
Peter, as blue clouds volitate around the
Bungalow, born from tabac of Manilla,
Out of his deep heart, adipose, a laughing,
Spicily tattles.
But alas! in fun's very midst; a low born
Boy to that guest deliberately telleth,
How the dark dawk troop is, again, the dismal
Palky a bringing.
Then as in tearful reticence a virgin,
All at once hears her miserable bridegroom,
Born to war service, to another hard fight
Call'd, by the trumpet,
Stops the gay small talk, in a jiffy wound up,
Of the poor wretch who body mind an' all had
Up to delights and quietude resigned, from
Cares o' the road free.
Nevertheless out his very green Petarras
Lugs he, fresh cherroot o' Manilla lighting,
And to old Peter, liberally, five dibs
Gives as a guerdon.
He, for he loves men generous to deal with,
Shakes in his fist those radiant rupeyas,
T'other, once more, is shut up in the fearful
Box of a palky.
When afar, ere long, in another hostel,
Vainly break both tooth and talon o'er a tough cock,

Old as his grand dam, and dubiously bolts he
Juice of a sand pit,
Nuddea's beer, and very jolly curry,
All at once ryled-up memory recalleth,
And he, with sighs, ejaculates the praise of
Peter, as under.
I, to thee grateful, bid adieu, my Peter!
Host of all hosts insuperable victor,
Nuddea's boast egregious, o' man cooks
First i' the country.

This clever ode was written by my old friend and fellow-passenger, Pierce Taylor, himself a poet and artist, who on that very account, in spite of his ability and efficient services in all the appointments he held, was never fully appreciated in the service.

In simple prose "Peter" was an East Indian, fat and well favoured, by profession manager and quasi butler of the Kishnaghur Dâk Bungalow, dispenser of grilled chickens, curry, pilau, and other Oriental dainties to weary travellers; ever ready, ever on the watch for the coming guest, and with subordinates adept in the art of catching unsuspicious chickens when the traveller's palankeen was seen in the distance.

The mention of "Peter," the hero of the Dâk Bungalow, leads me to the consideration of a curious but not altogether uninteresting character—one which, though unknown to the Englishman, whether poet, biographer, or historian, will, I imagine, be familiar to all Anglo-Indians. This remarkable and eccentric being is the "Dâk Bungalow Fowl," and while meditating on the character, life, and destiny of this melancholy biped, I came across so amusing and pathetic a description of its life, that I am tempted to quote it. The extract is taken

from the very clever little work *My Indian Garden*, written by Phil Robinson.

"The bird I speak of was a fine young cock, a Nazarene in his unclipt wings, with the columnar legs of an athlete, snatching life by sheer pluck, and dying without disgrace. His death happened on this wise.

"There came up the hill one day some travellers, with whom the cook at the staging house wished to stand well, and when they asked, 'What is there to eat?' he replied with suavity, 'Whatever your honours choose to order.' So they ordered beef and then mutton; but there being neither, they desisted from 'ordering,' and left it to the cook to arrange their meal; and he gave them soup made of an infant poulet, two side-dishes composed of two elder brothers, *a fine fowl roasted by way of joint*, and the grandmother of the family furnished forth a curry, and one of the party watched the dinner being caught. With the soup there was little difficulty, for it succumbed to a most obvious fraud. The side-dishes fell victims to curiosity, for while they were craning their necks into the cook-room door, a hand came suddenly round the corner and closed upon them. The curry, poor soul, was taken in her afternoon sleep. But the roast, the bird particularised above, showed sport, and well it might. For seven months it had daily evaded death, scorning alike the wiles of the cook and the artifices of his minions. Nothing would tempt it during the day within the enclosure in which so many of his family had lost their lives, and as it roosted high up in the walnut-tree behind the bungalow, night-surprises were out of the question. Whenever travellers came in

sight it would either fly on to the roof of the bungalow, and thence survey the preparations for dinner, or, slipping away quietly over the cliff, would enjoy healthful ease in some sequestered nook, whither was borne, tempered by distance and the comfortable sense of security, the last screech of the less wary. But its day had come. The fig-tree had drunk of the Neda. *The travellers had been expected.* An hour, therefore, before they came in sight, preparations were made for the great capture; and when, on the appearance of the first horseman, the fowl turned as usual to escape, he found two boys on the roof of the bungalow, six more up the walnut-tree, and a cordon of men round the yard. There was nothing for it but to trust to his wings; so, mounting on the wall, he flew for his life; and his strong wings bore him bravely up over the fowl-yard, and the goat-house, and the temple—over the upturned faces of the shouting men, up into the unbroken sky. Below him, far, far down, he saw the silver thread of water that lay along the valley between the hills. But there was a worse enemy than man on the watch—a hungry eagle—and on a sudden our flier saw between him and the red sunset the king of birds in kingly flight towards him, and, stopping himself in his course, he came fluttering down, poor Icarus, to the friendly covert of earth with outspread wings. But the eagle with closed pinions fell like a thunderbolt plump from out of the heavens, and striking him in mid-sky sent him twirling earthwards; then swooping down again, grasped him in his yellow talons before he touched the ground, and rising with slow flight winged his burdened way to the nearest resting-place—the roof of the dâk bungalow! But his exploit had been

watched, and hardly had his feet touched the welcome tiles before a shower of sticks and stones rained around him. One pebble struck him, and rising hastily at the affront, his prey escaped his talons, and, rolling over and over down the roof, fell into the arms of the exultant cook. But the scream of the baffled eagle drowned the death-cry of the fowl."

It is not every dâk-bungalow fowl who gives occasion for so sensational a struggle for life as that which is here so artistically depicted, but, like the Indian crow, he is a character peculiar to the precincts of the dâk-bungalow, and, like "*Le Roi est mort, vive le Roi,*" he is always present, and though sometimes essaying ineffectual efforts to escape his predestined destruction, is seldom successful.

"The Bungalow Fowl," in truth, represents every description of delicacy. The bungalow khansaman, knowing that he has no other condiment whatever to offer to the hungry traveller, will, when asked, unblushingly profess to provide every delicacy of the season; but when he appears and uncovers his dishes, there is fowl, and nothing but fowl, of every age, size, and degree of toughness. But though the sameness is disheartening, the fowl, or rather chicken, cutlet, is a real and unmistakable delicacy, which might with great advantage be introduced into the English cuisine.

During our short residence at the Cape of Good Hope in 1840, Lady D'Urban, the wife of Sir Benjamin, the former governor, was dangerously ill, and was unable to swallow animal food of the ordinary kind. We had brought with us a Bengalee cook from India, and having

experimentally sent her a delicate little chicken-cutlet, cooked as Bengalee cooks alone can cook it, she tasted and enjoyed it so much that we provided it daily, and for some days she could eat nothing else.

CHAPTER XXII.

CALCUTTA.

Appointment as Postmaster-General.—Sir H. Hardinge's Kindness.—Take Rooms at Miss Wright's.—Invited to stay with C. Prinsep.—Fancy Ball at Government House.—Rebecca.—Hon. A. Hardinge, Memo. of his Military Career. — Mrs. Thornton.—Sir H. Maddock's Ball.—Excursion with Sir H. Maddock to Akyab.—Acquaintance with Captain Phayre and Latter. — Letters from them. — Post-Office Reform. — My Report. — Trick on the Course. — Charade and Tableaux Vivans at Post Office.—Leave the Post-Office and remove to Chowringhee.—Henry Torrens.—His Career and Character. —Chaldean Manuscript.

I HAD, as I have already mentioned, been comforted by the assurance of Mr. Charles Hardinge, the private secretary, that the Governor-General was anxious to give me promotion, and, if possible, in Calcutta, and I was not, therefore, surprised when I received intimation that he had made me Postmaster-General.

It was not the sort of work exactly suited to my fancy, but it was promotion, and in Calcutta, so I was satisfied. The circumstances connected with my short

sojourn at Kishnaghur were, as I have shown, specially gratifying, and I had lived down Secretariat disparagement and the demoralisation of the paint-box.

In July 1845, a few days after my appointment, we went to Calcutta, and very shortly after our arrival were invited to dine with Sir Henry Hardinge.

My wife sat next to him at dinner, when he took the opportunity of expressing his hope that we were pleased with the arrangement; and after dinner, with that consideration and kindness which endeared his name and memory to all who knew him, he told me that he had given me the appointment because he knew that I wished to come to Calcutta, that he was aware of the success of my exertions at Kishnaghur, and added that he was anxious for a reform in the entire Postal Department.

I was subsequently told that when the appointment became vacant, a certain secretary, it is to be hoped on public grounds, had submitted several other names for selection, but Sir H. Hardinge substituted my name with his own hand, saying: "No; this time Mr. Tayler!"

Whether this was true or not, nothing could exceed the kindness of Sir Henry himself, as well as of his son, the private secretary.

In their view, a love of art was obviously no crime; indeed, as far as the latter was concerned, such love was a bond of sympathy, he himself being no ordinary artist, as the world has since had the means of knowing from the beautiful sketches he has published.

Not long after this, and before Sir Henry Hardinge left Calcutta, I took a sketch of him, and was flattered

by his pronouncing it himself to be the best that had ever been taken. I took another also of Charles Hardinge, a small copy of the latter is annexed.

Shortly after we reached Calcutta to join my new appointment, and while we were living at Miss Wright's boarding-house, our friends Mr. and Mrs. Charles Prinsep, who then occupied the beautiful building at Alipore, which has since been appropriated to the use of the Lieutenant-Governor, and is generally known by its name of "Belvedere," invited us to stay with them.

The invitation was most acceptable, not only from the opportunity it afforded us of obtaining the necessary appliances for a house of our own, but from the kind and friendly feelings which it indicated.

Short after our arrival, Sir Henry Hardinge gave a splendid fancy ball at Government House, at which my wife and I appeared in the characters of Rebecca and Isaac. In giving instructions for the preparation of the costumes, I followed the description so minutely given by Walter Scott in *Ivanhoe*, and from the general admiration which my wife obtained, I may safely say the get-up was successful. Sir Henry Hardinge was heard to say that she ought to be put under a glass-case.

The accompanying sketch is copied from a photograph taken when, many years afterwards, she represented the same character in our tableaux at Simla.

Not long after these incidents the aspect of affairs in the Punjab became threatening, and early in 1845 Sir Henry Hardinge, who, with wonderful prescience, had been quietly effecting arrangements to meet the danger, left Calcutta for Umballa.

The splendid achievements which ensued in the

Yours faithfully

Charles S. Hardinge

P.S.

campaign which shortly followed have been so fully described in the pages of history, that it would be intrusive in such a work as this, to dwell upon them.

Sir Henry was accompanied by his son Charles, the present Viscount, then acting as his private secretary, whose kind feelings regarding myself I have referred to in my last chapter, and also by his younger son, Arthur, "Young Arthur" as he was generally called.

As I am writing this, Arthur Hardinge has been appointed Commander-in-Chief of Bombay, a fitting reward for his brilliant services. The following three paragraphs are extracts from the *Times*, which has just given a tolerably full account of this distinguished officer's career:—

From the "Times," February 1881.

"THE NEW COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AT BOMBAY.

"Lieutenant-General the Hon. A. E. Hardinge is a second son of the late Viscount Hardinge. His experiences of active military life were early. Joining the army in 1844, he soon after proceeded to India to join the personal staff of the Governor-General, and there took part in the important actions in the Punjab, on the Sutlej, 1845-46, being present at the battles of Moodkee, Ferozeshah, where his horse was shot under him, and the decisive victory of Sobraon, for which he received the medal and two clasps.

"An older generation may remember the eloquent speech of the late Sir R. Peel, who, moving thanks in the House of Commons to the Governor-General and Army, quoted Sir H. Hardinge's despatches, speaking of the 'little Arthur,' who by his side shared the dangers and glories of those now memorable days. . . .

"During his service in India General Hardinge proved himself an active commander, and the enlightened interest with which he worked up the questions of infantry attack, and the attention he gave to musketry, on which subjects he gave lectures at the United Service Institute on his return, have found excellent fruits in the

proficiency which has been shown in a marked manner by the regiments then under his command, notably the 2nd battalion 60th Rifles and 15th Hussars, both now about to be actively engaged in the Transvaal."

The anxiety caused by the events in the Punjab necessarily cast a shade of sadness over the minds of the residents of Calcutta, but did not interfere with the usual amusements of society, so that evening entertainments, dances, and "burra khanas" (big dinners) took place in the ordinary course.

Amidst the many pleasantries which we enjoyed during this period was one in which, being myself the principal actor, I ought, if I were not an autobiographer, to apologise for introducing, but it, in truth, caused so much amusement, and gave our kind friend Sir Herbert Maddock such unceasing pleasure, that it is worthy of a place among what I may call the trifling realities of my life.

At the time it happened we were staying in the house of our kind friends Mr. and Mrs. Charles Prinsep—now, alas! no more. Sir Herbert Maddock, then Deputy Governor of Bengal, gave a fancy ball; and while we were talking it over with our host and hostess, the idea was suggested that I should appear at it in lady's costume.

The idea being approved, Mrs. Prinsep wrote to Sir Herbert Maddock saying that a Mrs. Thornton, an old friend of theirs, was coming to stay with them, and asking permission to bring her to the ball, a request which was, of course, complied with.

Preparations were now made to qualify me for the adventure. A splendid dress of the olden time was

concocted; the body was of dark blue velvet, the upper skirt, of flowered satin, was looped up with bows of ribbon, and the lower, or under skirt, was of red satin; white silk stockings and high-heeled red satin shoes, with large diamond buckles, completed the costume.

My head was adorned with a well-powdered wig of great elevation, from which escaped a long ringlet which rested on my shoulder, and a small wreath of flowers, such as were worn in those ancient days, nestled coquettishly on one side of the superstructure.

Thus arrayed we drove to the Deputy-Governor's house, Charles Prinsep somewhat endangering the illusion by his extra care as we descended from the carriage, and the constant repetition of my name: "Now, Mrs. Thornton; take care, Mrs. Thornton; mind the step, Mrs. Thornton," &c.

No one, however, discovered the disguise. We entered the room, and I was duly presented to Sir H. Maddock, who, though apparently struck with the singularity of my appearance, was politeness itself. I was introduced to several gentlemen, and our interviews were amusing.

The polka had only lately been presented into Calcutta, and very few could dance it. One young gentleman, however, who had lately arrived, prided himself on his performance of the dance, including the idiotic "toe and heel step," invented apparently for the express purpose of making men and women ridiculous.

Hearing of his accomplishment, I coyly and modestly suggested that I also could dance the polka. The youth was accordingly introduced to me, and off we started with two or three more couples. I had not the least idea

of the dance, except just knowing the form of the step; but I clung to my partner, obtruded my legs in "heel and toe" with animated gesture, showing my ancles, and scarlet shining feet rather unbecomingly, and utterly spoiling the exhibition which my partner had hoped to make. I doubt not he blessed me in his heart.

The next little scene was rather exciting. I was dancing a quadrille with rather a modest young man, and another quadrille was going on in the next room. Suddenly the cocoa-nut oil in one of the lamps over our heads began to splutter, as it is wont to do when approaching exhaustion. On hearing the sound I suddenly uttered a shrill scream, and fell backwards into the arms of my partner, where I remained as if in a deadly fit, weighing him down and drumming the floor with my heels. The band stopped, the dancers all crowded round, and after some minutes I revived, and was again, in all probability, blessed both by my partners and the rest of the disappointed dancers.

The delusion, however, was complete and triumphant; for spite of the two absurd scenes, and though I overheard several complimentary expressions, and especially from the mouth of one of our most intimate lady friends, whom I heard distinctly say, "Look at that horrid woman. Did you ever see such a creature? How she is showing her legs!" &c. &c.,—no one recognised me, or penetrated the mystery of my sex.

When the performance was over, however, my punishment came. The excitement during the whole evening had rendered me regardless of the unusual bodily pressure which I was enduring, under a pair of genuine stays, unmercifully laced! but, when we all got into the

carriage, the consciousness came on me like a shock, and I had to scream to my wife to be at least partially unlaced then and there, leaving my thorough emancipation till our arrival at the house.

Sir Herbert Maddock, when he discovered the identity of his eccentric guest, was delighted, and ever afterwards called me "Mrs. Thornton."

Some days afterwards, I sat next to a young officer at dinner, and he reverted to the "strange lady" he had seen at the Deputy Governor's ball. When, after some further observations, I asked him if he had heard that it was a man dressed up, he obstinately refused to believe it, saying he had looked at her arms and neck, and could not be deceived.

When I told him seriously it was I, he looked scared and, I fancy, thought me a madman.

About this time Sir Herbert Maddock kindly asked me to accompany him on a ten-days trip in a steamer to Akyab. I had not been very well, and was glad of the change. Sir Herbert had specially enjoined me to bring my pencil, and I had made an internal vow that I would draw something, spite of wind or weather, on each day of our trip.

Unhappily the last two days, I was confined to my cabin with severe tooth-ache, and was driven to self-representation to keep my vow. The annexed sketch is one of those taken on the occasion. It represents Akyab harbour.

It was in this tour that I first met Mr. (now Sir Arthur) Phayre, and Captain Latter, both of whom were then at Akyab.

The acquaintance of these two able and kind-hearted

Akyab Harbour.

men was a great pleasure, and led to an intimacy which was extremely gratifying; occasional correspondence was kept up with both, but was afterwards painfully interrupted as far as poor Captain Latter was concerned, by his awful murder.

The following letter, received from Captain Phayre, shows how deeply he had felt this tragic event:—

"My dear Tayler, "Rangoon, April 19th, 1854.

"My lengthened absence and constant moving in the upper part of this province prevented me from acknowledging before your very welcome letter of the 29th of January.

"I have had much to sadden me in this province, and, as you may suppose, poor Latter's melancholy fate was a severe blow to me; we were not able to get hold of his murderers, although particular persons are strongly suspected.

"I do hope you will be able to pay me a visit here before long. The town is being laid out, and in another year will, I have every hope, be in good order. At present our houses (old Buddhist monasteries chiefly) are sometimes of the roughest and warmest at this season. I shall be glad indeed when the time comes for your elevation to the Sudder Bench, and by that time I fancy this province will come under the Sudder Court, so that your tour here may be official as well as pleasure-seeking. I think you would enjoy a trip up the river, the scenery above Prome is really beautiful, that is about November before the hills have become parched up. You would find a great deal in scenery, buildings, and costumes to amuse your pencil.

"Believe me, my dear Tayler,

"Very sincerely yours,

"A. Phayre."

From Captain Latter himself, I received the following among many other letters:—

I venture to introduce it here, as it exhibits the warm and enthusiastic character of the writer.

Copy of Letter from Captain Latter.

"My dear Tayler, "Akyab, January 9th, 1846.

"If you remember, you wrote me a very very kind letter from the Billiard-room at Kyouk Phyoo, it is dated November 12th. I am exceedingly annoyed by finding that this letter was only posted at Kyouk Phyoo on the 5th of this month, and I received it this morning only. You many fancy how vexed I was, for it was a letter above all others which I could have wished to have received, for it has cheered me up amazingly. You must have left the letter with some of the fellows in the billiard-room to send on to me. Could you let me know who he was, and I will blow him up incontinently. And now, my dear Tayler, let me thank you most warmly for your kindness, so unexpected, so undeserved, and so unprecedented in this selfish world. I can assure you it comes to me with an effect which no words of mine can describe; for it seldom falls to my lot to have a word of kindness and encouragement meted out to me. You may depend upon my taking your advice to persevere and be steady. I am aware that this last is the ground on which I am assailed by those who wish to keep me out of employment. The only true grounds on which this accusation is founded is that naturally I have a great flow of spirits; but surely I have shown perseverance and steadiness in toiling my way against every discouragement through laborious pursuits. I know of no one who could exemplify better what I mean than yourself. You have an untiring flow of animal spirits; and yet during your short incumbency you have effected more in one of the most important branches of civil administration, the postal, than all who have preceded you. A man of talent alone can appreciate not only the importance of the improvements, but the difficulty of the undertaking; it was the effect of steadiness, judgment, determination, and assiduity, and yet I lay a wager that some of those sapient humbugs, which we always find in high places—say, for example, in the 'Scribe's chamber of the kingdom of Bung'—would have done so merely because you could not, or rather would not, pull a long face like them. You say you are no mason; there you have at me, but are mistaken. There are many who are not initiated, who are truly masonic in word and deed. The only monument that was ever erected to Sterne by two

brethren of the mystic tie, who though he was not one of that band, yet raised that humble structure in testimony and remembrance of one who was masonic in his writings. It is such acts and feelings that endear masonry to these high-minded, those few who redeem it from becoming merely a pot-house re-union. You know the story of Lefevre in Sterne; there is more true masonry in that than one will meet with in many a summer-day's reading. Talking of masonry and Boodhism in the same breath, I must recommend to your perusal a little paper of mine, which I fancy will shortly make its appearance in the Journal of the Asiatic Society. You must have heard of a new periodical which is about to be started. I have been tempted to dabble in it; but I mention it now as I was induced to wander in a measure from the subject I had proposed in order to describe portions of this province. I can assure you the artistic delight you showed with the scene of our 'Dragon' Court was a source of great pleasure to me, as I had never before met with anyone who had joined in the enthusiastic admiration I felt for the scenery of its rock-bound shores, and consequently, as I knew that at all events I should have one fellow feeler, I dilated *con amore* in my descriptions. I wrote a long time since begging you would propose me as a member of the Asiatic Society, which I hope you have done.

"With many thanks,

"Believe me, my dear Tayler,

"Yours very sincerely,

"THOS. LATTER."

Sir H. Hardinge having on my first arrival expressed the hope that I should be able to introduce some reform in the office to which he had appointed me, I lost no time in overhauling the department in all its branches, and most unsatisfactory was its condition throughout. Such improvement as I found possible in the despatch and delivery of letters in and about Calcutta itself, I contrived very shortly to effect, and the change gave great satisfaction; but general and extensive reform could not

be accomplished without the sanction of the higher authorities, and the "Wet Blanket" system of the Bengal Government, in the absence of Sir Henry Hardinge, who left Calcutta for the Punjab, rendered important change impossible. The sketches here given, offer a comic representation of the change which had taken place in the delivery of letters in Calcutta. "Before" exhibits the peon, or carrier, who delivers the letters squatting down in familiar confab with the

BEFORE.

"durwan," or gate-keeper of the house, with a bundle of letters by his side on the ground, while the durwan, who had just received a letter for his master or mistress, remains quietly gossiping with the bearer, without a thought for the delivery, and the omnipresent and inquisitive crow is inspecting the fallen letters. "After," illustrates the reform; the shabby dress of the peon is changed for a livery, he holds a bell in his hands, and strides rapidly towards the durwan who steps forward

AFTER.

eagerly to meet him, while in the adjoining street, the newly started carriage, with peons on their way to the suburbs, is rattling along the road to the sound of a horn.

But greater postal events were to come. Terrible neglect and laxity were some months afterwards discovered in the Post Office itself, which was under the immediate charge of a resident Deputy Postmaster, and this discovery led to my taking possession of a suite of rooms in the extensive building, to enable me to exercise a more vigilant and effectual superintendence over the clerks and subordinates.

This discovery and the measures which I adopted for the prevention of future abuse led to a brief discussion in the regions of red-tape, and my occupation of the premises, in the first instance regarded with doubtful approval, was afterwards interfered with; and a short correspondence ensued with the secretary to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. The gentleman whom I had in the first instance consulted, and with whose concurrence I had entered on the arrangement mentioned, was Mr. George Bushby, the Secretary to the Supreme Government.

On the 25th of March 1846, I submitted to Government a long and elaborate report on the condition of the Post Office department, in which I recommended a complete change in the system hitherto adopted; the introduction of compulsory pre-payment, the use of stamps instead of cash, and, last, though not least, the abolition of franking! As the latter subject caused some offence to sundry of the high officials, and helped to place difficulties in the way of other reforms, I will here

Yours very sincerely

G. A. Huxley

venture to quote the paragraphs in which that particular subject was referred to, and mention that the incident of the "satin shoes and ribbon," mentioned in paragraph 41, was a well known fact, and by no means a single instance of the abuse of patronage.

Para. 36 to 47—"Abolition of personal franking."

"36. The subject of franking naturally leads to a consideration of the privilege now enjoyed by certain individuals under the provisions of Clause 62 of the Post Office Rules and Regulations (of August 1837) of franking their private letters.

"37. The custom of franking is on many accounts open to objection.

"38. Every privilege, whether granted positively in the shape of an endowment, or negatively in the form of individual exemption from general tax, or other public burthen, should be definite and specific; but the privilege of franking is in its very essence undefined and incapable of definition.

"39. Its extension or limitation is regulated by no fixed rule nor obvious moral obligation, but by the capricious fluctuations of individual fancy, wayward opinion, or doubtful conscientiousness.

"40. One person will limit the operation of the privilege to his own correspondence, or that of his family and connections; a third may not scruple to include all who on any pretence make application for the benefit.

"41. One restricts his passport to letters, another to parcels, and a third is not unwilling to vouchsafe the shelter of his autograph (I here speak of facts) to satin shoes and ribands.

"42. And as the mode of operation and extent of indulgence is thus variable and undefined, so is also the benefit derived by the privileged few themselves.

"43. The lax and unscrupulous deprives the exchequer, and to the same degree, therefore, does damage to the public interests, to the extent of 100 rupees per mensem; the more strict and punctilious to the extent of only ten.

"44. The economical rejoices to save present expense, however trifling; the generous, or the indifferent, think the saving dearly purchased by the trouble and annoyance it entails in the shape of

application from the unprivileged. To these arguments against the expediency of the franking privilege may be added that in this department, unlike any other, whatever privilege or exemption the beneficence of Government can bestow, ought to be conferred on the poor rather than on the rich. The interchange of thought, of affection, and requirements, is not like the use of glass windows, carriages, or tobacco—a luxurious superfluity of which the use or consumption is regulated by the humour of the consumer, and with which the poor have no concern—but the very life and sustenance of man's rational being.

"45. The concession, therefore, to the wealthy few of any privilege in this department, which must *pro tanto* tend to enhance the cost to the poorer class of this greatest of blessings, is peculiarly invidious and indefensible.

"46. In its bearing upon the postal machinery, also, the effect of franking is injurious, as it tends to disturb the principle of uniformity, which I conceive to be the cardinal point of efficiency.

"47. Invidious, therefore, in its character, uncertain in value and indefinite in extent, little prized by those on whom it is conferred, and injurious in its effects upon the postal system, the privilege of franking letters I propose at once and altogether to abolish."

My entire report is too long to be transcribed, although the Secretary of State has just kindly supplied me with a copy of it.

It was acknowledged at the time with dry and formal approval, but nothing was done to carry out my proposals in practice. Offence was caused to some of the exalted officials by my reference to the abuse of franking, and several years afterwards another officer was appointed as a sort of Special Commissioner to carry out the reform, to pick my brains, and, of course, to receive all the credit. A pleasant case of *sic vos non vobis!*

At about this period, and in the midst of graver discussions, the company and association of so many gay

and youthful spirits not unnaturally gave birth at times to a contagious propensity for fun, or, as the austere might say, "frivolity"; one amusing instance of this I will here mention.

The idea of the thing was to carry out an innocent deception among some of our more fastidious friends, and relieve in some measure the persistent and uninteresting dulness of Calcutta existence.

To this end, we dressed up Charles Hobhouse, my wife's nephew (now Sir Charles), then a young civilian, as a quizzical old man, with very shabby habiliments, and Lord William Hay, now the Marquis of Tweeddale, also a civilian neophyte, with a bonnet, long jacket and gown, which were indued over his usual clothes. Lord William in this disguise, with long ringlets hanging gracefully down over his face, took his place inside our pony carriage with my wife, while the old gentleman (Charles Hobhouse) sat by my side on the box, where I did coachman; and though the lady with her curls and handsome face was entitled to some admiration, the general effect of the couple was ludicrous in the extreme, and great was the surprise with which our party was regarded by the elite of the Calcutta course.

But our special enjoyment was in taking in some of our more particular friends, among "the best people."

For this purpose we drove up to the dashing carriage of one of them, containing the young ladies of a select family, and using a name known to appertain to an indigo-planter up the country, not celebrated for his own or consort's elegance, we ostentatiously introduced the two supposed visitors, and entangled them in conversation, which on their part at least was carried on with

great familiarity, to the ill-disguised chagrin of the others. When this act was passed, we drove rapidly away to Lord W. Hay's house; he stripped off his outer dress, bonnet, and ringlets, and mounting his horse, which was already saddled, rode back to the course, and at once trotting up to the very carriage, which contained the victimised and somewhat aggrieved party, launched out in criticism of those strange and vulgar people whom the Taylers had brought upon the course, and the good nature we had shown in introducing them.

The next day the party of the carriage lunched with us at the Post Office, when to their infinite astonishment the truth was revealed, and on incredulity being expressed, the ringlets, dress, and the supposititious bonnet of Mrs. ——, were produced, and the old gentleman himself, in the person of Charles Hobhouse, was there to vouch for his identity.

My wife and I had always been fond of the drama, and both had a fancy for acting. "Tableaux vivans" had just then come into fashion, though stupidly confined in general to representations of single groups or pictures.

It struck me that the performance of an interesting and well-known story, like those of Walter Scott, in a successive series of tableaux, would be a great improvement; and we accordingly, after consultation with our friends, who received the proposal with rapture, arranged to place the whole story of the "Talisman" upon the stage, selecting ten or twelve scenes to be produced in the order of the narrative. Another innovation, also, we thought of, viz. a musical accompaniment by a player hidden from the audience, while a voice

sang three or four original lines descriptive of the scene.

I will not tire the reader by any detailed description of all the preparations, the rehearsals with their droll and amusing accompaniments, and the intense delight which the whole affair caused to the enthusiastic "corps dramatique." I will only say that the tableaux were by universal consent pronounced a brilliant success, and our exertions were amply rewarded by the enthusiastic applause of the audience.

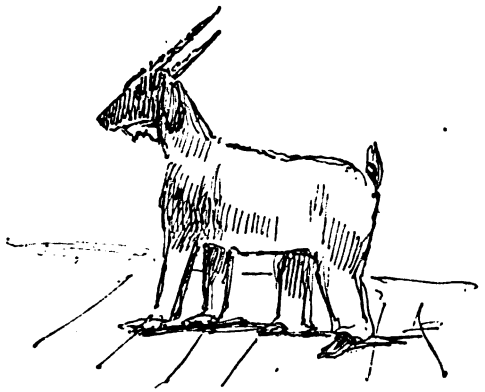
The tableaux were preceded by a little charade written by myself on the word "antelope." The two syllables of the word, "aunt" and "elope," were acted by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Torrens, Major Lang, Major Sewell, and myself. Mr. and Mrs. Torrens, as I need hardly say, were celebrated for their special talents, and represented the lovers; Major Lang was the old aunt, Mrs. Higginbotham; and I myself the old gentleman, Mr. Sniffles; Major Sewell, a most amusing actor, took the part of Boots. The gist of the story was the endeavour of an aunt anxious to give her niece in marriage to an old Indian, the girl herself being in love with the youthful Mortimer; elopement was the climax.

The characters are represented in the annexed sketch.

The story may be conceived; but the whole word being a novel histrionic effort, and as its representation produced indescribable sensation, it deserves some special notice.

While the audience after the first two scenes—in which, spite of "my aunt's" prohibition, the undutiful niece elopes with her lover in disguise—were expecting a third

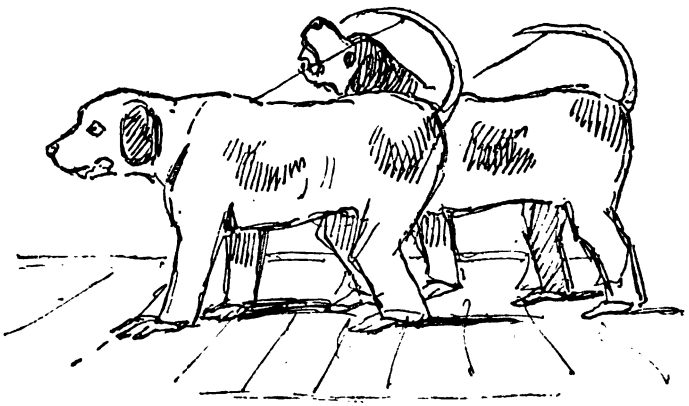
scene of a similar nature—the curtain was drawn up, and a being was exhibited, of which this sketch is a tolerably fair representation.



THE DEAR BOY.

It was, in fact, a young civilian of exceptional agility, with an antelope's head and horns, a skin stretched tightly over his body, and a very decided though small tail. The creature was greeted with warm applause, which increased as it began to trip round and round the room, sometimes stooping to browse, sometimes skipping with innocent joyousness. After a few minutes, however, the interesting animal was seen to start, raise its head, and listen anxiously. Just then, at a considerable distance, the sound of a horn was heard (blown, in fact, at the end of a long passage in the office)! the sound was repeated, the frightened deer took two or three steps on that side and on this, and then, to the astonishment of the audience, especially the front row, who were sitting just under the stage, he came with a bound clean over the foot-lights! and then making one turn, bounded off at full speed into the room on the right.

At this moment the enthusiasm of the audience was indescribable! Ladies and gentlemen rose up, some stood on their chairs; there were shouts and laughter, none exactly knew what was coming, when suddenly the horn was heard again, and with it the voice as it were of hounds! All eyes were turned to the stage entrance, when suddenly in came two dogs, evidently the leading hounds of the pack.



CANINE CIVILIANS.

Putting their noses to the ground, and sniffing away in true sporting fashion, they at length gave tongue, and commenced making the exact tour which the antelope had taken before them! Before they had finished, the rest of the pack came in, did precisely the same, and then in full cry all advanced, as had the antelope, with vigorous bound over the foot-lights, their noses down, and their tails vehemently wagging, and then rushed together into the side-room. Then came the huntsman and whipper-in, Lord William Hay and young Maddock, with bright red coats and jockey caps, riding on hobby-

horses; they cracked their whips, their horses pranced, and they also came with an ecstatic jump over the lights and careered after the pack.

At this crisis the excitement of the whole audience increased; for a moment, they seemed to think that all was over, but just then they heard at a distance the exact counterpart of a pack of hounds in full cry! It approached nearer and nearer, and at last in rushed the unhappy antelope at the first entrance, exhausted and staggering, with a large red tongue hanging out of his mouth; then the whole pack with open mouths, and tails still more violently wagging; they rushed upon their victim; the huntsman and whipper-in were there, and amidst the noise of the dogs, and a loud cry of "Worry! worry!" the scene closed and the curtain was dropped!

Such uncontrollable excitement I have never witnessed at a theatre, before or since.

One most amusing incident connected with the canine pack I must not omit. The leading hound was George Plowden, a well-known civilian of some standing. After I had equipped him head and tail, and made over the materials to his keeping, one day his wife, who had been told nothing of the disguise, came up into her dressing-room, and on opening the door saw to her astonishment what appeared to be a dog, on all fours, just opposite the cheval-glass, his head turned sideways towards the glass, and his right hand pulling a string which made his tail wag! Her alarm and astonishment may be imagined. Was it a mad dog or a madman? It was her husband!

Some months after these events we made arrangements

for leaving the Post Office, and accordingly hired a house in Chowringhee Road, just built by Colonel Burlton.

Having mentioned Henry Torrens as one of our festive party, who took part both in our little charade of "Antelope," in which he represented the favoured lover Mortimer, as well as in the tableau in which he personated "Blondel," I am tempted to say a few words regarding one who, I believe, may be safely regarded as one of the most talented, if not the most talented civilian who ever entered the Service, as all who knew him will acknowledge.

To this end I will quote a passage from a memoir of his life, published by the late Mr. James Hume, the well-known barrister of Calcutta.

"With a genius equal to cope with the best men of the land in the highest functions of the State, with a mind eager for learning, and a pen whose lively and imaginative, as well as pathetic powers, and whose ready eloquence have rarely been surpassed, with a temperament active, restless, and untiring, an amazing fund of desultory and abstruse information, and a singular power of acquiring and retaining it, and with a genius for language seldom equalled; a first-rate man in society, and that 'usage du monde,' which that society alone can give, the charm and delight of every circle in which he moved, and the darling of those whose intimacy and affections he shared."

All that is here said, I can cordially endorse: seldom have the ranks of the Civil Service contained so brilliant and accomplished a member; seldom has so promising a career been so painfully blighted by the petty manœuvring of official jealousy.

Henry Torrens had the audacity to write and publish some amusing squibs, in ridicule of certain acts of the Bengal Secretariat, otherwise known as the "Bengal Clique," and he was a marked man.

The partial distribution of patronage, the undue promotion of favoured individuals, and the ludicrous fiasco which led to the accusation of impropriety against a young civilian whose aunt, hitherto living in seclusion, suddenly appeared in a buggy on the Calcutta course, in a specially smart bonnet—had afforded tempting occasion for Henry Torrens' facile pen; he ridiculed these abuses in frequent verse. The squibs caused universal amusement, but the writer was never forgiven by those whom they exposed.

That regarding the dutiful nephew and the aunt with the gay bonnet is here given.

CHALDEAN MANUSCRIPT.

By H. Torrens.

[The translator has numbered his rendering according as he finds the separations run in the original, which is written in rhymed prose.]

And thus was it in the city Ulghutta, which, being interpreted, meaneth *plunging or putting in the foot*, and men were very vigilant there, seeing and reporting continually.

Chapter XLVII.

1. Now it came to pass that a certain scribe, which was in his pupilage, dwelt in the city Ulghutta, with his father's brother, which was a merchant, and his name was called "Zimo."

2. And the young scribe delighted in chariots, and

they called him "Jehu," even by reason of his driving, according as is written in the book of the Hebrews.

3. And he that was called Jehu said in his heart, "Lo! now here is the sister-in-law of my father, even mine uncle's wife, which goeth not forth in chariots, neither is her heart gladdened with the sound of wheels. Let us ask her that she go abroad, and see my driving, and gladden her soul with the sight of the chariots and the horsemen."

4. So he stood before the sister-in-law of his father, and said unto her even as he had thought in his heart, but when she heard him, she laughed with exceeding laughter, and said—

5. "Surely, my son, my days are ancient, and I am since many days not as are the daughters of men in the city Ulghutta; I deck myself not, neither go I forth, nor seek I where the people are gathered together without the city walls, neither care I for the chariots and horsemen.

5. "In the day-time work I diligently, to see after the pottage and the seethed meats, and look that neither they be sodden, nor the flesh which is roasted be burnt, and when night cometh I go up and sit me on the house-top, even as a sparrow.

7. "Nevertheless, for that thou art dutiful, seeking to honour the grey hairs of the sister-in-law of thy father, even of thine uncle's wife, lo! will I do the thing I have not done—yea, not for ten years—and I will go down into the place of chariots, and will hear the noise of the wheels, and will see thy driving, O my son."

8. Now when he that was called Jehu heard the words of the wife of his uncle, his heart was glad, and

he arose straightway and prepared the chariot and placed her thereon, he gathered up the thongs, and took to him also the scourge, even that which is called by the name of the man Crowther, and went forth to the place of chariots.

9. Now it came to pass that when the sister-in-law of his father saw the press of chariots and the horsemen, also when the sound of the wheels came up, her ears were made glad, and she rejoiced, and said, "Verily, the place of chariots is a good place."

10. And he too that was called Jehu was glad at her gladness, and said in his heart, "Aha!" and he tightened the thong, and drove exceeding cunning.

11. But there stood at that time afar off in the plain, one that looked about him, seeing many things, and he saw also him that was called Jehu, and his father's sister-in-law likewise, upon the chariots.

12. Now he that looked about was a certain under-scribe of them to whom were committed the kingdom of Bung, and they called his name Seed'un,* which is, being interpreted, *I perceived him,* by reason of his great seeingness.

13. And Seed'un was shocked and perturbed with exceeding perturbation when he perceived him that was called Jehu, for he said in his heart, "Surely, she that sitteth with him is a strange woman!"

14. So he ran privily, and went, and came before the chief scribe of the kingdom of Bung, which was over him, and Seed'un bowed before him, and said, "Let my chief hear the word of his under-scribe."

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* Beadon.

15. Now the name of the chief scribe of Bung was Fredoc Kallidad.*

Chapter XLVIII.

1. Now Fredoc Kallidad sat in his summer parlour by reason of the heat, and he played vehemently upon a three-stringed instrument, and Seed'un stood before him, and made obeisance, and said—

2. "Verily, he that is called Jehu, which is a scribe in his pupilage, hath done that which is folly in the land, for he hath taken a strange woman, and hath set her upon his chariot, and shown her even to all the people."

3. And Fredoc Kallidad answered, "Was she of the daughters of Bung† ?"

4. But Seed'un answered to him, "Nay, she was even of the daughters of our own people."

5. So when Fredoc Kallidad heard the words of Seed'un the under-scribe, his heart was vexed, and he sighed a long sigh by reason of his sorrow, and also that he was himself lengthy, and said, "Of a surety he that is called Jehu hath wrought naughtiness."

6. "Let us, therefore, go up to him that was lopped in battle, even the governor, Sryhen Radingee,‡ and show to him how that the young man Jehu hath been naughty, and hath showed strange women in the place of chariots, so that he be grievously rebuked."

7. And they took counsel, and arose, and went and

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* Frederick Halliday. † Bengal.
‡ Sir Henry Hardinge.

stood before the governor, and bowed themselves, and told him of all things how they had happened.

8. Now, he that was lopped in battle, even Sryhen Radingee, was a just man, and gentle, and lenient, though he was of the men of war, and he said, "Nay, the wrong-doer is young and foolish, let him not be rebuked."

9. But they persisted, and answered and said, "It is good that it be so, for peradventure, should this rebuke be not given, where are we with scribes in their pupilage? Even all their hearts may wax fat, and they may kick recusantly, and mount strange women upon chariots, and show the same to all the people; let him, therefore, be rebuked."

10. And they wrestled with the governor, even Sryhen Radingee, and they prevailed, and caused the order to be issued that he who was called Jehu be rebuked.

11. So they sent unto the man who was named Mashalla* (which was an overseer of the scribes in their pupilage), and they said, "Write unto the young man called Jehu, and let him come before thy face."

12. And Mashalla wrote a missive and sealed it, and sent it, and called up the young man before him.

13. Now he that was called Jehu was an innocent young man (beside the matter of chariots), and he said in his soul, "Wherefore am I thus sent for, and what is the sin I have done?"

14. And he was perplexed, and he trembled some little in his heart by reason of the missive.

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* Marshall.

15. Yet he stood before Mashalla; and Mashalla arose, and made his face stern, and spoke heavily, and said, "What art thou among the small scribes that thou shouldest exalt thy horn to set thyself on the plain without the city wall, even upon a chariot, together with strange women?"

16. And he that was called Jehu was abashed at hearing these words, by reason he was guilty of chariots but in no wise of strange women, seeing that she which he had set up was even the wife of his uncle.

17. And the light became as black before his eyes, and he said, "What thing is this of which thou dost accuse me?"

18. "Lo! I have a chariot, and it is yellow; yea, even very yellow like unto saffron; but she I did set upon it is no strange woman, for lo! she is mine aunt and very ancient."

19. And when Mashalla heard these words he was exceedingly ashamed.

20. But the young man which was called Jehu arose quickly, and gathered his garments around him and fled forth, and went in much disturbance to the house of his uncle Zimo.

21. And he said unto him, "Oh, mine uncle, I am disquieted because of my chariot, which is as saffron, and because of the eye of one who seeth so much that he seeth even what is not!"

22. And his uncle answered, "Thou speakest riddles."

23. But when the young man told all his tale, even the whole, then said his uncle Zimo, "What is this? that for one while that the sister-in-law of thy father

hath gone forth to the place of chariots, she should be esteemed as a strange woman?"

24. And the young man answered, "Surely, Seed'un saw her, and he is an under-scribe; let him answer."

25. So Zimo waxed exceeding wroth, even with much anger, and he took counsel what to do; and he called for Geelan Durros,* a certain merchant, which was his friend, and he said, "Geelan, counsel me."

26. And Geelan Durros counselled him accordingly, and he said, "Go thou to the man Bibosh." †

27. Now Bibosh was the chiefest of the scribes, a pleasant man which smiled, having grey hair, but his heart young, very comfortable to all which knew him, and well beloved in every place.

28. But for what Zimo said unto Bibosh, or for what Bibosh wrote unto him, lo! is it not written in the book of Bibosh, and of all what Bibosh did,—or if it be not written, verily it will be written, when so that book shall be written itself.

29. And Geelan Durros said unto Zimo, "Thou hast called upon Bibosh, yet is not that enough; thou must call upon Seed'un the under-scribe, even very especially."

30. So Geelan Durros girt him with a weapon of war, and he rose and went, and stood before Seed'un, the underscribe, which was sitting taking accounts of the matters of the kingdom of Bung in the scribe's chamber.

31. And Geelan Durros spake rebukingly and said, "What is this thou hast done, O Seed'un, to write

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* Gillanders. † Bushby.

unto the man Mashalla, and to call upon him that is called Jehu, so that a hissing is made amongst the people ?"

32. And Seed'un answered mildly, and he said, "What hissing ?"

33. Then Geelan Durros answered, "Lo ! the hissing against her which was set upon a chariot, even the wife of Zimo the merchant, which is my friend, which went down into the place of chariots, and thou sawest her."

34. And Seed'un said, "Lo ! for the hissing what know I ? and for the wife of Zimo, what hath she to do with me ? and for him that is called Jehu, let his mother take cognizance of him, whether he goeth out or stayeth in, for again it is nought to me ; but for the letter to Mashalla, lo ! wrote I it, not of myself, but by orders."

35. And Geelan Durros took up his sleeve, and he laughed therein, and he said softly, "Walker !" and went forth, and abided no longer in the scribe's chamber.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CHOWRINGHEE.

House in Chowringhee Road.—First Seikh Campaign.—Undertake a Large Picture of the Triumphal Reception of the Guns sent down by Sir H. Hardinge.—Plan of the Picture.—Sir Herbert Maddock's Accident.—Philharmonic Society.—Its Organisation and Gradual Growth. — Dissatisfaction caused by Favouritism.—Squibs in the Newspapers.—Mr. Turner, the Blind Organist.—"Mesmerism."—Dr. Esdaile.—Interesting Criminal Trial.—Hospital established by Government.—Remarkable Operation.—Triumph of the System.—Amusing Scene with Amateur Mesmerists.—Letter from Friends, and Notices in the Press regarding my Picture of the "Triumphal Reception of the Seikh Guns" and the "Death of the Hog."—Notices in the Press.

An incident in the artistic branch of my life occurred during our residence in Chowringhee, which I will here notice.

On the conclusion of the first Punjab campaign, Sir Henry Hardinge ordered all the guns taken from the Seikhs to be sent down to Calcutta, and gave directions to the Deputy Governor to receive them in state, with due honour and ceremony.

Grand preparations were accordingly made by the Deputy Governor, Sir Herbert Maddock. Triumphal arches were erected, with the names of the great victories emblazoned upon them. In front of Government House, the Deputy Governor, with Sir Harry Smith, the hero of Aliwal, on his right hand, the several Members of Council, and other officials, were assembled on horseback. The guns—250 in number—were ranged in a line, at right angles from the Government House. The regiments then in Calcutta marched by the Deputy Governor in single file, presenting arms as they passed, while the Deputy Governor took off his cocked hat in acknowledgment of each salute.

Just before these ceremonies were commenced, I received an intimation that Sir H. Hardinge greatly wished that a picture of the scene should be made; and as, strange to say, in those days, in the absence of professional artists, I was the sole representative of the pictorial department in Calcutta, I had the presumption to undertake the work.

For this purpose I obtained the largest sheet of drawing-paper I could procure in Calcutta, arranged the plan of the picture, two or three days before, from the box of our carriage, and then, setting aside two or three hours every morning for the duty, entered on the task.

To enable me to paint the figures correctly, I had a wooden horse made, and after I had taken slight sketches outside on real horses, all the big-wigs came by turns into my studio, and seated themselves gracefully, or ungracefully, as the case might be, on the lifeless steed, to be then and there immortalised.

Besides the actual characters, a few picturesque figures were introduced, one of which I give as a specimen :—

The picture, when finished, was sent home to be engraved by Lewis, the Queen's engraver; it was the largest engraving then known. The total cost of engraving on steel was 800 guineas, printing off the copies about the same; but a much larger sum was raised by subscription.

An amusing, though somewhat painful accident, connected with one of my principal sitters, is worthy of record.

To facilitate the accurate completion of my great picture, Sir Herbert Maddock kindly arranged that I should go up to Government House at Barrackpore, and stay with him for some days, when he would have the regiment paraded before me, and also sit for his own portrait.

I gladly accepted the invitation, and on the appointed day, we adjourned after breakfast to the park, a few yards distant from the house.

My table, with the drawing-board and materials, was placed in position, and I took my seat. Sir H. Maddock's steed was brought out, and Sir Herbert himself then appeared.

Alas, for human weakness! The desire to represent, with due dignity, his high position as Deputy Governor, had induced him not only to procure the tallest horse he could command, but also to obtain a bran-new suit of clothes! Thus he came forward, glittering and faultless, in the well-known "Windsor uniform," spick and span, indued for the first time. But new trousers are apt to be tight, and straps are unyielding.

The Deputy Governor stood by the side of his steed, and endeavoured to mount; the unsympathising habiliments forbade—he could only get his toe into the stirrup, and thus acquired no fulcrum to raise himself. But the toe tickled the animal, and when a more determined thrust was made, the offended horse started off! Poor Sir Herbert, on his back, held for a few minutes by his foot half in and half out of the stirrup! Down came the horse upon me, as if wishing to punish me as the *fons et origo* of the *fiasco*. I had just time to jump aside; but my table and chair were knocked down,

W. Maddock

and my painting-materials scattered abroad. There was panic among the spectators. After a few more steps, Sir Herbert was left on the ground, and, though the scene was ludicrous at the moment to the observers, his damage was most serious. His imprisoned foot had received such a wrench that it swelled at once, and his boot had to be cut into bits before it could be taken off. It was a serious accident, and confined him to his couch for many weeks, and when, about two months afterwards, I put the finishing strokes to his figure, he was sitting astride a round pillow at the end of his couch, in a dressing-gown, with the gilded coat on his back, and cocked hat in his hands, but his nether-man in pyejamah dishabille.

His kindly disposition, spite of his accident and pain, induced him to join in hearty laughter at his anomalous pose, and inconsistent attire.

My vanity may be pardoned if I here give a few of the notes written in regard to this audacious picture, which I had completed within three months, during my leisure minutes before or after office. These I have placed at the close of this chapter.

My artist brother, Frederick Tayler, when he heard of my undertaking, wrote that I was a most presumptuous amateur; that he or any other artist would have spent months in grouping and other preliminaries, whereas I had commenced and carried through the entire picture within three months, working at it only for two or three hours before office time in the morning, and always in dread of failure, there not being a second sheet of paper of the proper size in all Calcutta!

Another picture I also painted at the request of the

Tent Club. The subject was "The Death of the Hog." It represented a party of the Tent Club, all well known characters, Messrs. Larpent, Beckwith, W. Bracken, Warren Frith, George Bushby, and the notorious Tom Pitts, all grouped together, with the hog lying dead on the ground. This picture was also very favourably received, and largely subscribed for.

About this time there was one association which had gradually attained considerable importance, and is well deserving of separate notice.

This was the "Philharmonic Society," which comprised all, or almost all, the musical talent in Calcutta.

The society had been organised and was presided over by Mr. (now Sir Frederick) Halliday, the Secretary to the Bengal Government, of whom mention has been already made, and who was the centre figure in the Sikh Guns picture.

This society, with its collateral branches, assumed, after a time, an important, if not a demi-official character, and led to several amusing incidents.

Whether the presiding genius of the assembly was a great man, may be questioned, but there was no doubt that he was a great fiddler, and that the instrument which he played, and still plays at the Crystal Palace, and other musical meetings in England, was the largest of the violoncello species ever seen. Mr. Halliday, himself, was an excellent musician, and when he had been permanently established in Calcutta, he took up the musical line with praiseworthy earnestness, and gradually brought together a small but compact body of harmonists. There were then in Calcutta two or three distinguished professionals, who were at once enrolled; Phillip Delmar,

THE GREAT VALLADARES.

an excellent flautist, and a very minute little violinist named Valladares, who, from his peculiar smallness, was the antipode of his great leader. The professional element, however, was contracted, and for the more complete success of the association it was indispensable to enrol amateurs.

This necessity it was that, after some time, led to unmistakable abuses. Far above, and at times altogether irrespective of the ordinary elements of official excellence in candidates for office, musical talents began to form the first consideration. A civilian with a turn for fiddling, a talent for the flute, or an incipient genius for the

violoncello, was marked for preferment; a husband whose wife had a taste for the piano, or was blessed with a sweet voice, was equally happy, and a new principle of preferment was gradually inaugurated.

For some time this erratic mode of election, though forming the subject of satirical remark, and some individual discontent, was good-naturedly tolerated, but latterly, when several painful instances of favouritism occurred, real indignation was aroused, and the system became a ground of serious complaint.

The climax was reached when a junior officer, the special favourite of the President, was raised to an appointment far above many others quite his equal, and it was discovered that, to supply a deficiency in the Philharmonic orchestra, he had been privately practising, and had actually learned to play on that overpowering instrument the "trombone."

Just about the same time graver cause of dissatisfaction arose.

In the Church of St. John, which served as a Cathedral before Bishop Wilson managed to erect the present building, there was an organist who had for years given satisfaction by his performance on the organ in the church. But a new organ had lately been purchased, and the unhappy blind organist was discharged in his old age, and in his place a new man was appointed, and that man was at the same time enlisted, and formed a valuable acquisition to the great Philharmonic "choir."

Indignation now became serious, and several clever squibs appeared in the daily journals, some of which will perhaps amuse my readers.

The following was published when the displacement of

old Mr. Turner was first made public; the allusion to "Bacon" and the "Organum Novum" was a decidedly happy hit.

"In Calcutta, 'tis clear, all advancement depends
Upon grounds never elsewhere computed,
By sense or by service you 'll ne'er gain your ends,
'Ars musica' reigns undisputed.

"Be you witty or talented, sage or profound,
Your abilities splendid or middling,
Small, small is your chance unless in you be found
A peculiar fitness for fiddling.

"In the Church and the State the same reason applied
Will serve for promoting or moving all,
The cause that set poor old blind Turner aside,
Exalted the far-sighted 'Juvenal.'*

"For the trombone had B——n his gift ne'er displayed
He ne'er for the Board had been taken;
And could Turner the 'Organum novum' have played,
He doubtless had saved his own 'Bacon.'"

Another was published when the discussion was being warmly carried on in the papers, regarding the appointment of Mr. B—— to the Secretaryship of the Sudder Board, to which many good men, of far higher standing, were aspirants.

As there is nothing personally offensive in this *jeu d'esprit* in regard to the fortunate candidate, the objection against the appointment being made on principle, and not in derogation of the individual promoted, I do not hesitate to give it:—

"People ask, well they may, what 'Seed'un'† has done,
That so soon such a prize in the service he 's won;

* From "Juvenis"—a young man.

† *Vide* Chaldean Manuscript.

To me it is clear, for we all must acknowledge,
His zeal for the morals of young men in college!
Then his sight's so acute, that I give you my word
His eyes can undoubtedly 'see through a Board.'
He 's a host, too, you know, at all *Holiday's* parties,
Where he wisely has studied 'fideliter artes';*
And in fine, my dear Hurk, you must candidly own
There is no one can play half so well the trombone.
So Donelly, Skipwith, Bill Tayler, and Crawford,
Though they wish they may get it, must wait till it 's offered."

No question formed so general and prominent a subject of discussion as this. Mr. Halliday in truth, though Secretary only *de jure*, was *de facto* Governor without the responsibility. The Governor-General, who was *ex officio* Deputy Governor of Bengal when present, was seldom at his post, and even then, during the years of which I am writing, was absorbed in grave matters of imperial interest. When absent, his place was supplied by the Senior Member of Council, generally a worthy, but not always a clever or competent statesman, and very often without the slightest practical experience.

The necessary consequence was that the permanent secretary, in the presence of a succession of "Rois faineans," was all powerful, and the patronage was entirely in his hands.

I have already given an instance, even before the musical mania had developed itself, of the diplomatic machinery which could be brought into play to accomplish a desired object; and there are many now living who will remember that the favouritism and abuse of

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* *Fideliter* "fiddle-wise," from *fides* "a fiddle."

patronage which the rule of the fiddle produced, was a cause of widespread discontent.

A curious instance of this I can offer. Sir Herbert Maddock was fully conscious of the feeling that existed on this subject, and several times declared to me, with whom he was on very intimate terms, that when in power he would not allow the Bengal Secretary to exercise such uncontrolled and questionable influence.

Very shortly after his appointment, however, the "trombone" promotion to which I have above referred took place, and unfair as the selection was, it was clear that no interference had been exercised.

A very amusing squib appeared on this being announced:—

"When King* Tom of Civilians was made *primus* nob,
He vowed he would ne'er supersede one;
But oh! what a bass, what a double-bass job
Is this sudden promotion of 'Seed'un.'

"Tom swore to be led by the nose with a string,
To him was a wonder, a riddle;
But little he knew what a terrible thing,
Is the string of a very big fiddle."

It was while Sir Herbert Maddock was Deputy-Governor that the subject of mesmerism attracted public attention, and led to the temporary establishment in Calcutta of a mesmeric hospital.

The way in which this attention was first excited is curious and interesting.

It had for some time been known that Dr. Esdaile, who was the medical officer at Hooghly, had been

* The familiar name for Sir Thomas Herbert Maddock.

making experiments in the jail, and among individuals, in furtherance of his openly professed belief in the mysterious power of mesmerism; but his statements, though accepted by some, had by others been received with incredulity and ridicule.

While matters were in this position, Dr. Esdaile had one day gone to some distance from the town of Hooghly, when he saw a strange-looking man walking along, and at some paces behind him a lad, whose peculiar countenance and dreamy manner attracted the attention of the experienced mesmerist.

Further observation convinced him that the boy was under mesmeric influence, and not capable of voluntary action.

He had the man at once arrested, and the matter was laid before a magistrate, and by him transferred to a judge.

The case being entirely new, the judge was somewhat puzzled. Dr. Esdaile's evidence was taken, and when he was asked whether he felt convinced of the fact of mesmeric power, be begged that the judge would allow him the opportunity of exhibiting it in court, and in the presence of the spectators.

To this end he proposed that while the witnesses were giving their evidence, he should come quietly into court, by a small door at the end, behind the witnesses, and then, without their knowledge, subject them by passes to the influence.

This was sensational, and somewhat unusual, but there was manifest reason in the request, and it was wisely acquiesced in by the judge. When the evidence commenced, one of the witnesses, with his hands joined,

was relating what he had seen to the judge; Dr. Esdaile quietly entered, and commenced making the usual passes at some feet distant behind his back. In a few minutes the hitherto steady voice of the witness faltered, his eyes became gradually vacant, his mouth opened, his words became indistinct, and at last he fell back into the arms of Dr. Esdaile, who, as he saw his increasing weakness came close enough to catch him.

This remarkable and unanswerable proof of mesmeric *reality*, at once attracted the notice of Government, and after further inquiry and consultation Sir Herbert Maddock established a mesmeric hospital in Calcutta.

Dr. Esdaile was an intimate friend of mine, and we had often had conversation on the subject of mesmerism.

Knowing my propensity for the pencil, he used frequently to carry me off to the hospital to take sketches of his patients.

I will here mention an interesting instance; a portrait of the patient is annexed.

One morning Dr. Esdaile called to tell me that a very pretty girl had come to the hospital with extraordinary lumps of flesh on her ears, which, having heard of the effects of mesmerism, she wanted to have cut off.

I went off with him to the hospital and took a sketch of the girl, Dr. Esdaile promising to come again for me when the girl had fallen into a trance, which usually took place in about twenty-four hours.

The next day I went again with him to the hospital to witness the operation, and a most interesting scene it was.

It was a native holiday; there was a crowd of people, several Mahomedan moolvies, and some English unbelieving doctors.

The girl was in a deep trance, and looked exceedingly pretty as she lay on the bed; the operation lasted about one hour, the doctors having to cut off all the super-abundant flesh, and bring out the ear clear and clean from all encumbrance.

During the whole time the girl remained like a sleeping infant, without sound or movement, and when the whole was over, Dr. Esdaile, reversing the passes, awoke her, and then turning to the assembled spectators, told them that they might put any questions they fancied. Several people spoke to the girl. She said she had felt nothing, and was utterly unconscious of what had passed.

Dr. Esdaile then gave her a hand-glass, and told her to look at her face. She obeyed; but when she saw the cloth in which her ears were wrapped, stained with blood, she at once fainted away. On her recovery, however, when made to understand that her natural ear-rings had been removed, the expression on her face was delightful to behold.

The whole scene was most impressive; every sceptic (and there were many) renounced his doubts; there was no longer any room for question. "Mesmerism," apart from "clairvoyance," and other mysterious attributes, was as a fact triumphantly established. I made a picture of the whole scene, which I sent home to the *Illustrated News*, but it never reached its destination.

Long before this, while at Midnapore, I had taken a portrait of a girl mesmerised, or supposed to be mesmerised, of which a small sketch is annexed.

A most amusing incident connected with this subject occurred at a station near Calcutta.

MESMERISED GIRL—MIDNAPORE.

Some gentlemen were one evening after dinner discussing the question, and one especially having witnessed some of Dr. Esdaile's achievements, which were just then attracting general attention, and believing that he himself possessed the mesmeric power, was enthusiastic on the subject, and proposed that one of the "syces" (grooms) should be sent for, and experimented on. A man was accordingly summoned, and entered the dining-room, where the host with the several friends were sitting. He was made to

lie down on the sofa, passes were made over him, and he went off after some time into a trance. The amateur mesmerists then pinched him, pricked him with pins, and subjected him to other merciless ill-treatment, but the man remained unmoved, and showed no sign of sensation or pain.

Great was the triumph, especially of the leader, and all were more or less convinced that the experiment had been successful.

The next morning when the same party assembled at breakfast, the subject was discussed, and one of the party proposed that the susceptible syce should be sent for and questioned as to his sensations; he came into the room, when the following dialogue ensued:—

Q. "Well, Gopee, tell us now, did you not feel any sensation when we touched you last night?"

A. "Yes, my lord, I felt."

Q. "Oh, you did! Were you hurt?"

A. "Yes, my lord, I was hurt."

Q. (With some astonishment.) "Were you really? Were you much hurt?"

A. "Yes, my lord, very much hurt; suffered much pain" (burra durd hooa).

Here the confusion and bewilderment of the spectators was overwhelming.

Q. "Then" (with indignation) "why on earth did you not say so?"

A. (With a smile.) "I thought, my lord, it was all a 'tomasha' (bit of fun) of the lord sahib's, and that your slave was not to appear to feel!"

The sensation which this naïve admission caused may

be imagined; surprise and disappointment was after a time followed by genuine laughter, while the bravery and self-endurance of the uncomplaining "syce" became an object—spite of the mesmeric failure—of unfeigned admiration.

But, notwithstanding this little farce, and the more serious disappointments which occasionally perplexed the enthusiastic acolytes of the new school of mesmerists, the fact of the magnetic influence on passive and non-resistent bodies was unanswerably established in Calcutta by the strange spectacle daily exhibited of patients undergoing the most agonising operations, without a groan or sigh or slightest contortion of the face, while a street or two off, under the same operations, the unhappy sufferers were shrieking with agony.

Had not the awkward fact presented itself that some constitutions or temperaments could successfully resist the mesmeric influence, the hospital so wisely established by Sir Herbert Maddock would doubtless have been in existence at the present day; but such a fact was fatal to its complete success, as it would have been often impossible to tell beforehand what subjects would exhibit resistance, and valuable time might thus be irreparably lost.

The mysterious physical influence of animal magnetism was subsequently associated with the still greater mysteries of somnambulism and clairvoyance, and eventually with the pretensions of the spiritualist.

Whatever is the real truth of these strange manifestations, they were in practice so confused, and occasionally intermingled with such impudent and unblushing

deception, that it became impossible to distinguish truth from falsehood, reality from pretence.

If anyone wishes to obtain a true and rational insight into the whole subject, he should read and digest the admirable little work on *Spiritualism and Animal Magnetism*, written by Dr. G. Zerffi the official lecturer at the South Kensington Museum. That animal magnetism is in itself a mystery, and is accompanied with almost incredible phenomena, appears to me an indisputable fact, and I am strongly of opinion that the curious and unaccountable phenomena exhibited by so-called spiritualists in reality owe their origin to this marvellous power.

I have myself witnessed many spiritualistic séances since I returned to England, and have been greatly struck with some—painfully so with one—of the wonders exhibited; but Dr. Zerffi's learned exposition of the magnetic power is sufficient to account for the phenomena, without the interference of spirits from the other world.

The whole subject is one of interest and vital importance, which deserves far more exhaustive investigation than it has yet received, but cannot be worthily treated in a work like this.

As I have mentioned the fact of my presumption in venturing to execute the large picture of the "Triumphal Reception of the Seikh Guns," containing as it did sixty-four portraits, many of them of full length, I think I am entitled, in vindication of my audacity, to show here two or three of the notes written to me on the subject by men whose opinions on such a subject will be generally respected.

Copy of Letter from Sir F. CURRIE to Lord HARDINGE.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"I went yesterday to see Mr. Tayler's picture of the reception of the Sikh guns.

"It is an admirable picture, far surpassing what I had expected, though I had heard it highly praised.

"The execution, as far as I can judge, is very good indeed, and the grouping excellent. The likenesses are very faithful; there was scarcely one of them with whom I am acquainted that I did not recognise at once. I regret much that your lordship has not had an opportunity of seeing it before it goes home. I am sure you would be exceedingly pleased with it. I consider it altogether an admirable performance, and worthy of the subject which it commemorates.

"Mr. Tayler is, I believe, about to write to your lordship about the picture, and I have requested him to send this note of my opinion with his letter.

"I am, my dear Lord,

"Yours very sincerely,

"F. CURRIE."

From C. HARDINGE, Esq. (now Lord HARDINGE), Private Secretary to the Governor-General.

"MY DEAR TAYLER, "Simla, June 17th.

"I have received your letter enclosing the prospectus of your work, and will take an early opportunity of submitting it to the Governor-General.

"I congratulate you on your success; for, from all I hear, it is an admirable effort of your pencil.

"Your brother will be able to assist you in superintending the engraving, which, I have no doubt, will be done in Lewis's best style.

"I am anxious to see your 'Tent Club' picture; to me it will be a pleasant reminiscence hereafter of the meetings I have enjoyed in the Bukra jungles.

"With my best regards to Mrs. Tayler,

"Believe me,

"Yours very sincerely,

C. S. HARDINGE."

From Mrs. Lowis, Wife of J. Lowis, B.C.S.

"My dear Mr. Tayler,

"I will send your note to Mr. Mangles, which will best explain what you wish to say regarding the imputation of neglect of duty, &c. I don't see why drawing should interfere with a man's duty more than practising on the bass viol.

"I went to town last Friday week on purpose to see the picture, and was very much pleased with it. I can now write from my own observation, and not from hearsay as I did before. It is a beautiful picture, and most of the likenesses excellent.

"We recognised Mr. Ryan in the park from his resemblance to the youth in the picture, though we did not know him before.

"With kind love to Mrs. Tayler,

"Believe me,

"Most sincerely yours,

"L. Lowis."

APPENDIX.

"Death of the Hog," by W. Tayler, Esq., B.C.S.

Notices of the Press.

"We have been much pleased with the inspection of a capital picture, which is now on view at Messrs. Lattey and Co.'s, previous to its being sent home to be engraved. It is in water-colours, is the work of Mr. William Tayler, C.S., whose accomplishments as an amateur artist are well known, and represents the members of the Tent Club, an association of enthusiastic pig-stickers, mounted and equipped for the sport, apparently engaged in consultation as to where they

shall look for another hog. The portraits of the members of the club—there are nine of them—are unmistakable, in spite of the somewhat *outré* but appropriate costumes in which they are disguised. There is also a likeness of Mr. Tom Pitts to the life, and others of sundry natives and horses, which, we doubt not, those who know the originals can pronounce equally good. Independent of the excellence of the likenesses, however, the picture, which is of considerable size, is both in design and execution, in drawing and colouring of figures and landscape, a really fine work of art, such a one as Calcutta does not often produce. It is to be sent to England and engraved by Mr. F. C. Lewis, the eminent engraver; and if that gentleman is as successful in preserving the likenesses as Mr. Tayler has been in catching them, the result of his labours will be a highly interesting print, exhibiting portraits of some of the best-known members, not of the Tent Club only, but of Calcutta society. Messrs. Lattey are prepared to receive subscribers' names."—*Calcutta Star.*

"There is an admirable picture, a water-colour drawing, at Messrs. Lattey Brothers, which is going home by the next steamer to be engraved by Lewis. The subject is hog-hunting, and there are no less than nine portraits of the members of the Tent Club, all unmistakable as likenesses, and yet more striking from their truth of character. The number of portraits in all is fifteen: Tom Pitts, as Mr. John Pitt of Cook and Co.'s is familiarly called, having the most prominent place, and the other five being natives familiar to the club. The principal hand, on his ragged tat, is perhaps the best bit of the whole composition.

"The scene is one of repose—a consultation probably as to the next country to be beat; and the worthy and experienced ex-Secretary, who so lately left us, is pointing from his elephant the course which, perhaps, none will dispute. A dead hog in the foreground shows the day's sport has, at any rate, begun, and the horses indicate that they have had a breather in catching him. It is a long time since we have seen anything so thoroughly characteristic, and the care with which the whole is handled betokens the pencil of a master. Those who are at all familiar with the portfolio of W. Tayler, Esq., will easily believe that we have done poor justice to this composition. It is so natural and well arranged—so picturesque and so expressive—that the print can hardly fail to command a large sale even among strangers to this country and our renowned Nimrods. Few who know both will be content to be without it. Messrs. Lattey & Co. have a book open for subscribers' names."—*Bengal Hurkaru.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

FIRST TOUR AS POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

Start on our Tour from Calcutta to Benares, *viâ* Grand Trunk Road.—Gobind Banorjee.—His reluctance to accompany us.—His Quiet Pony.—Disaster.—Leaves us, to die at the Sacred City.—Recovery.—Leave the Trunk Road at Sheerghotty.—March *viâ* Gya to Patna.—Stay with E. Ravenshaw, the Commissioner.—Tour with friends to Arrah.—Rhotasghur.—Reach Benares.—Entertained by Sir D. Macleod.—Visit the Maharajah.—Return by Water.

SHORTLY after our change of residence, it was thought desirable that I should travel throughout the Bengal Presidency to inspect the several offices, and ascertain the condition of the Grand Trunk road between Calcutta and Benares.

It was obvious that as travelling—except on most urgent and indispensable occasions—can only be accomplished with tolerable comfort in the cold months, *i.e.* between October and February, a complete tour could only be effected in several separate seasons.

Our first tour, then, we settled for the cold season of

1847-48, and made due preparations for a regular march up the Trunk Road to Benares by land, returning by the river Ganges in boats.

Sending up all our equipage before us to Hooghly by water, we joined it ourselves two days afterwards, and then made our final arrangements.

Our party consisted of an English sergeant, an East Indian clerk, a set of tents with the men in charge, several chuprassies, and last, though not least, a veteran native clerk, named Gobind Banorjee.

My wife with her ayah was to travel in an equi-rotal carriage, a sort of palankeen on four wheels of equal size (hence the name), which had lately been brought into fashion for transit on the Trunk Road, in lieu of the old palankeen.

Our plan was to travel from Bungalow to Bungalow each day, usually about thirteen or fourteen miles.

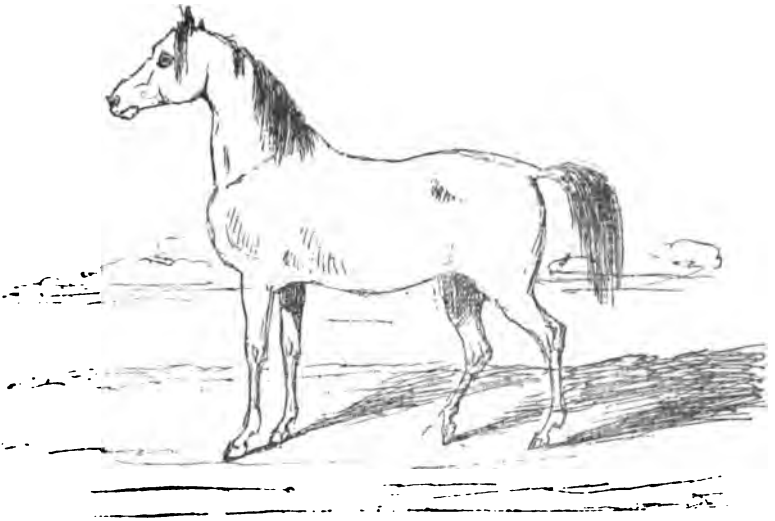
Before leaving Hooghly we witnessed an interesting though painful scene.

On the bank of the Ganges a Hindoo woman was seated in a sad but not ungraceful attitude; the dead body of her husband was stretched at her feet, with the heels just touching the sacred stream, while her friends had gone to fetch the materials for cremation. The pariah dog and crow were patient witnesses of the scene, probably in hopes of obtaining a portion of the corpse.

I had a favourite horse whom I had christened "Eothen"; my clerks and the English sergeant had their ponies, and our entire equipment was complete.

But the one individual deserving of separate and special notice was the old native clerk whom I have mentioned, Gobind Banorjee, and, as he is the hero of

On the Bank of the Ganges.



"EOTHEN."

a rather sensational adventure which took place some days after our start, I will at once introduce him to the reader.

Baboo Gobind Banorjee was one of the most respectable and trustworthy of the native clerks in the General Post Office.

He had been in the office for nearly forty years, and had all the details of the departments at his fingers ends.

Gobind Banorjee, therefore, I resolved at all events to take with me, as his assistance would be invaluable in overhauling the accounts and statistics of the mofussil post offices.

The old gentlemân in his loyalty was quite ready to go, but when I told him we were to march overland, and that, consequently, unless he could afford to retain a palankeen and bearers he would be compelled to ride,

his countenance fell to zero; he declared he had never ridden in his life, did not know how to sit upon a horse, and that it would be tempting his "nuseeb" (destiny) if he ventured, after so many years.

After some encouragement and persuasion, however, he at last gave in, and promised to follow my advice by choosing a very quiet pony, innocent of tricks, and with a character for unobtrusive steadiness. This he did.

This point being settled, we started on our expedition, and as we set out each day at different times, we saw nothing for some days of Gobind.

One evening, however, as we were travelling slowly on, my wife in her equi-rotal carriage and I on horseback, I cantered forward, as it was getting late, to give notice of our approach at the dâk bungalow, and after going in advance for a short distance, I suddenly saw before me a figure, which, after some minutes, I recognised as no less a being than Baboo Gobind Banorjee on his amiable and unimpassioned horse.

He was walking slowly on, with his back turned, and I had plenty of time, as I approached, to scan and digest his costume.

Anything more profoundly absurd I never saw and shall never see again. He had indued a large English old-fashioned night-cap on his head, a brown cloak of no particular shape, but ample in its folds around his body; a pair of coarse bright blue worsted stockings on his legs, and on his feet the regular native shoes, down at the heels! There he was, sitting sedately on his steed, both legs stretched out, with toes turned up, and shoe-heels gaping.

The tattoo appeared the ideal of quiet apathetic laziness, and I felt quite consoled at the happy semblance of security and peace.

Alas for appearances! As I was anxious to get on to give orders at the dâk bungalow for dinner, I trotted forward, not anticipating any chance of disturbance; but as I drew near I clearly perceived the tatto's ears thrown gradually back, and a suspicious lowering of the hind quarters. On, however, I went, not dreaming of anything worse, but I heard a squeak, felt conscious of some disturbance, and looking back, I saw the excellent Baboo biting the ground. But I had little time for contemplation; this extra quiet and amiable "tattoo" having thus got rid of the rider, no sooner felt himself untrammelled, than he rushed after me like a tiger, and knowing the real danger of a collision with a rampant native pony, I had no alternative but rapid and ignominious flight.

On we therefore fled till we reached the bungalow, when, being well in front at the moment, I shouted to

the servants who were at the doors. They rushed forward, mobbed, and finally secured the hypocritical little beast.

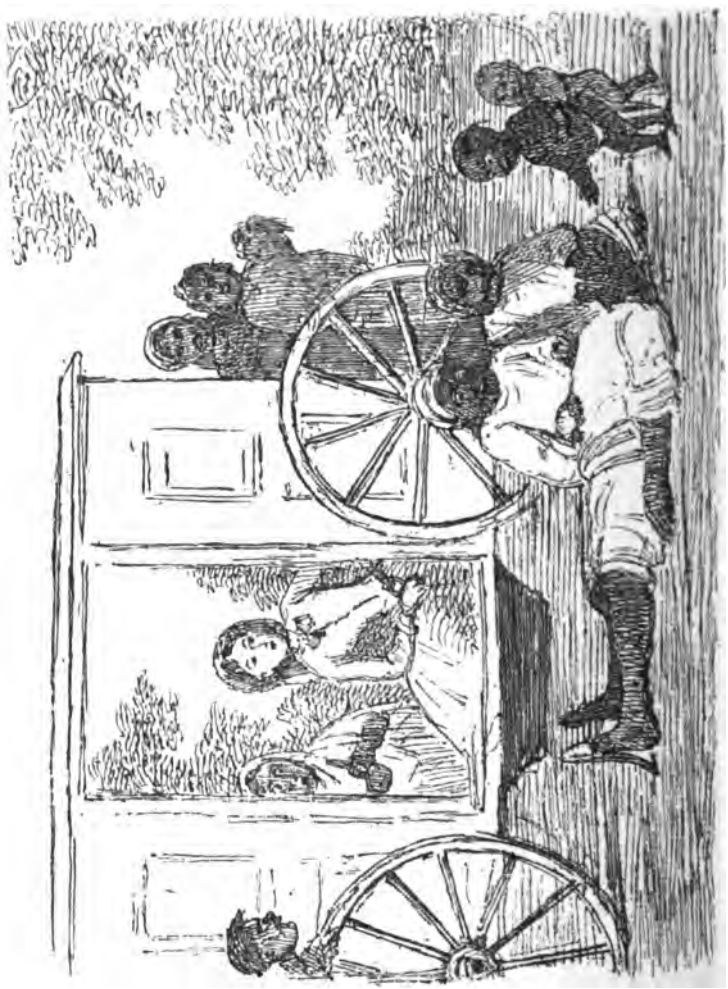
I then went back to the assistance of Gobind, whom I left prostrate on the road. As I came near the spot, I witnessed a most affecting scene.

My wife had come up in her carriage, unhappy Gobind Baboo was stretched on the ground, and two chuprassies were applying salts to the upturned nose.

When he was partially recovered, my wife kindly volunteered to vacate the carriage and give the wounded Baboo her seat. He was accordingly assisted into the vehicle, to the great amusement of some idle spectators. When we reached the bungalow the poor old man told me, in feeble tone, during a brief confidential interview, that he was sure he should die, and begged to be sent off at once to the city of Gya, some fifty miles off. A dhooly was procured, and he went off by moonlight, sad and solitary, with the brown cloak wrapped carefully round him, the old night-cap greatly the worse for the accident, he himself sorrowfully intent upon delivering up his soul, as he believed, in the sacred city.

But he was not a good prophet. Some days afterwards we reached Gya, and as we entered the city, one of the first objects we met was a man leading a pony. We immediately recognised the animal as the "wicked one." On asking the man who he was, he said that the Post Office Baboo, who had lately arrived, had just sold the tatoo for five rupees.

The old fellow was still alive, and when I saw him, and asked him how he was, he said, "God is good, but I will never mount a horse again as long as I live."



But before the adventure of the unhappy Gobind we had passed several interesting spots on the Trunk Road.

The Grand Trunk Road, which before the introduction of railways was the one great medium of communication for man and beast, between Calcutta and the Upper Provinces, formerly crossed the Ramghur hills, by the Dunghye pass; after the road had been constructed it remained for some years without any larger bridges, and in a very imperfect state.

But Sir Henry Hardinge, taking a military view of the matter, ordered the construction of the necessary bridges and the more effective completion of the road.

Captain P. Wallis was then appointed superintendent, and Lieutenant (now General) Beadle became his assistant in 1843.

Some interruption was caused in the general work by the first Punjab Campaign, but in 1844-45 Lieutenant Beadle was placed in executive charge of a large portion of the road, with orders to bridge the road between the two crossings of the Barakur river in two years and a half—a work involving the construction of fifty bridges.

Sir Henry Hardinge himself took direct personal interest in the work.

As we only remained a few hours at each bungalow, we had little time for observation or inquiry, but such of the places we passed as, from their picturesque or unusual appearance, were deserving of notice, I continued to sketch *en passant.*

After leaving my old station, Burdwan, where we remained for several days, the first scene worthy of record was the Burakur river, which was sufficiently

shallow to admit of my wife's equi-rotal carriage being dragged across.

When in the middle of the river, the four black bearers up to their knees, dragging the carriage, with the others pushing behind, the belted chuprassies, and other attendants, with myself on horse-back, and the bright stream reflecting the figures, formed a picturesque if not an artistic group, familiar in those days, but now, since the introduction of the railways, seldom to be seen.

On the banks of this river are three large-sized Jein temples.

Several stages further on we approached the Parisnath hill, a striking object, on which is a Jein monastery.

Shortly afterwards we again crossed the Burakur river, and some miles further on we reached the station of Burkutta.

Here we met Lieutenant Beadle, who was superintending with both zeal and ability the important work entrusted to him.

In Captain Beadle I found a sympathising mind, for he painted remarkably well, and had made many extremely pretty sketches of the surrounding country. Under his special pioneering I made a picture of the hot wells, which were at a short distance from his encampment.

The most important work which was in progress at that time was the Kurumnasa bridge.

The bridge was designed by the well-known James Prinsep, the funds being supplied by Putnee Mull, a wealthy banker of Benares.

The waters of the Kurumnasa are regarded as the waters of pollution. Travellers used to be carried across at high charges to escape contamination.

At Sheerghatty we had left the Trunk Road and continued our march to Gya.

Having here some intimate friends we remained at the station several days, during which I visited and inspected the post office, and took a few random sketches in the neighbourhood, but as, after several years, when Commissioner of Patna, I visited this station, and stayed there some time, I will reserve all further accounts of this very interesting district for my second volume; on this occasion I had little time for observation or painting, and we were glad to proceed on our journey.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Alexander, friends whom we had fallen in with on our road, and who had accompanied us for several stages in our march, left us here, to our great regret, and we then continued our march to Patna, which is some sixty miles from Gya, stopping for the night half-way, at Jehanabad, but meeting with no adventures on our way.

In my rôle of Postmaster-General, however, being deeply interested in the state of the road, I collected and took with me several unique specimens of the large stones scattered over the ground under the pretence of repair, and exhibited them afterwards to the authorities at head-quarters, as specimens of Behar roads!

On reaching Patna, the city destined ten years afterwards to be the scene of such sensational events, we went at once, by invitation, to the house of Mr. Edward Ravenshaw, the then Commissioner, a gentleman well-known in the Civil Service as a scholar and antiquarian.

At Patna I first saw the Ekha, or one-horse carriage of the natives.

An old friend, who had been a fellow-passenger with us in our first voyage from England, having heard of our arrival, came to see us from a station a few miles off, and finding that we were on our road to Benares, he proposed to accompany us for a portion of the way, making a detour through Arrah and Sasseram, and visiting the far-famed mountain of "Rhotas."

Arrah, since rendered famous for the glorious defence made by the officials of the station in 1857, against the revolted regiments of Dinapore, and the subsequent splendid victory under Major, now Sir Vincent Eyre, is about thirty miles from Patna. Before reaching it you have to pass a celebrated village called Moneer, where there is an ancient and highly picturesque

Mahomedan mosque, and several curious pieces of sculpture. Shahabad is a most interesting district, containing many picturesque and curious spots, some of which I painted during this tour; but several years afterwards, when I was appointed Civil and Session Judge of the district, I took so many more sketches, and saw so much much more of the province than during our present transit, that it will be more satisfactory to bring the whole together (including Gya and Patna) in the second volume of this work.

On leaving Shahabad with its picturesque and interesting scenes, we proceeded to Benares, as I was anxious there to hold personal consultation with the postmaster of that city.

We were received at the ghât by the oldest man in India, a jemadar mentioned by Bishop Heber in his life as, at that time even, of an extraordinary age. A portrait of this old gentleman, who came on horseback to the ghât, I painted next day at the house of Mr. (afterwards Sir Donald) Macleod, who received us and told us the man's antecedents.

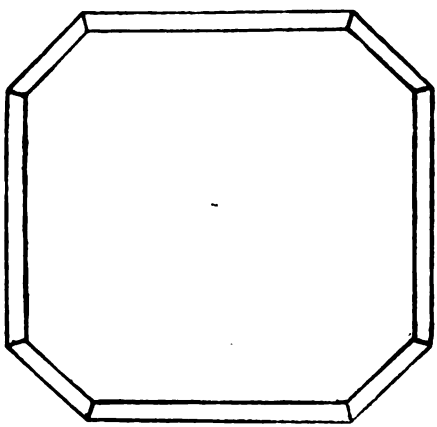
Sir Donald MacLeod, I may justly say, was one among a thousand; courteous, benevolent, and simple-minded, he was an ornament to the service in which he eventually rose to the highest post. His sudden and awful death in London in 1870 created universal regret.

During our short residence here, in addition to our postal conferences, we paid the Rajah of Benares a visit in his palace, and saw what we could of the great city and its principal buildings.

The Maharajah received us with much courtesy. I took a portrait of him, which I have since, unfortu-

nately, mislaid; but having met him again in 1876, during the visit of the Prince of Wales, at the house of Mr. Pearson, one of the judges of the Sudder Court at Allahabad, I again took a hurried sketch, which I here subjoin. He wears well; more than thirty years had elapsed between the two sittings!

One curious reminiscence of our first meeting is the annexed plan of a gigantic emerald which he wore on his arm, about the largest, I should imagine, in the world.



Grand Emerald (Exact Size).

The Ganges, or Gunga, has its rise in the southern face of the Himalaya Mountains, and after a course of 1,500 or 1,600 miles, falls into the Bay of Bengal, through two principal channels, widely separated from each other; the one known as the river Hooghly, which flows by Calcutta in its passage to the Bay of Bengal; the other, further to the eastward, termed the Podda, or Ganges, and subsequently the Megna, which finds its way to the sea, through the Sunderbunds.

After many years of uncertainty, it has at length been fully established that the Ganges takes its origin in British territory, from a spot on the southern side of the Himalaya.

Ten miles above Gungootree the Bhagaretee (or Ganges) first appears at a place called the "Cow's mouth" (Gowmukh). This is a large stone, to which superstition or fancy has given the form of the sacred animal.

The most holy places are at the "Prayagas," or junctions, at Allahabad, where the influx gives especial sanctity. A douche at this and similar spots in the higher course of the river washes away all sins.

On leaving Benares we embarked on board a comfortable boat, or "bhauleah," with all our essential belongings, intending to reach Calcutta by water, stopping for a day or more at each of the stations *en route*, to enable me to inspect the several post offices.

The prospect was pleasant, the weather was delightful, the stations on our road were each and all of them worth visiting, and we had friends or acquaintances at most of them.

The opportunity of sketching all I saw, either at the

stations themselves, or on the banks of the great Ganges, was not to be despised.

We accordingly embarked with feelings of satisfaction in which the only regret was the bidding farewell to our kind and noble host, whose acquaintance it was a privilege to have made.

My first sketch was made an hour or two after we left the Benares ghât; it was a distant view of the great city, with its lofty minarets—well worthy a larger and more perfect picture. It is now in the possession of a friend to whom I gave it.

The station at which we first stopped was Ghazeepore, a picturesque town, known as the site of one of the Government studs, and famous for its rose-gardens, which supply the material for the well-known rose-water of India.

The magistrate and collector was Mr. Phillip Trench, well known as an accomplished artist, and one whose official character had not been injured by his "love for the fine arts."

The principal object of interest at this station is the tomb of the Marquis Cornwallis, the Governor-General of India. It it of white marble adorned with figures by Flaxman, and is placed under a circular building surrounded by a verandah and enclosed in iron railings. A plantation of trees surrounds the building.

Passing Buxar, a station on the other side of the river, which, like Ghazeepore, is noted for little save a Government stud, we once more reached Patna, a city of no mean celebrity, having on many occasions been the seat and centre of the most important and sensational events. As, however, I shall have much to say in my second

volume, in regard both to the city and the district, I will here only recal what passed on this, our flying visit, and the names of the officers whom we there met.

While remaining here we again went to the house of Mr. E. Ravenshaw. Mr. Oldfield was the opium agent, living some distance from Bankipore, which is the name of the civil station where the principal residents live. We took occasion to visit the opium godown, and inspected the process of preparing the drug. There was also an old gentleman of the name of John Bardoe Elliot, a retired civilian who had been for some years employed as special commissioner in the province, where he had amassed a large fortune, and on resigning the service remained at Patna as a permanent resident, purchasing a house, with a beautiful garden, surrounded on all sides by a high wall. The collector of the district was Mr. Anson.

Our next station was Monghyr. Here we were received and cordially greeted by the magistrate Mr. Travers and his friend Mr. St. Quintin.

One of the most remarkable facts in Monghyr is the Seeta Khoond, and as "Fanny Parks" has given an interesting description of it, I will here transcribe her account:—

"The Seeta Khoond is a brilliantly clear spring of boiling hot water, which bubbles and boils up most beautifully, and is enclosed in a large space with steps descending to the water. I never saw so beautiful a spring or such living water! There are four springs close to it, but they are all of cold water, and have none of the clearness or beauty of Seeta's Well. The water

is contained in an enclosure of stone, in which it rises up sparkling and bubbling from its rocky bed. The steps on which you stand are very hot, and a hot steam rises from the surface; the water is so clear you can see the points at which it springs up from its rock.

"The stream from the Seeta Khoond is constantly flowing into the jheel below in a little rivulet that gradually widens, and in which the presence of the hot water is perceptible on a cold morning for about one hundred yards from the spring.

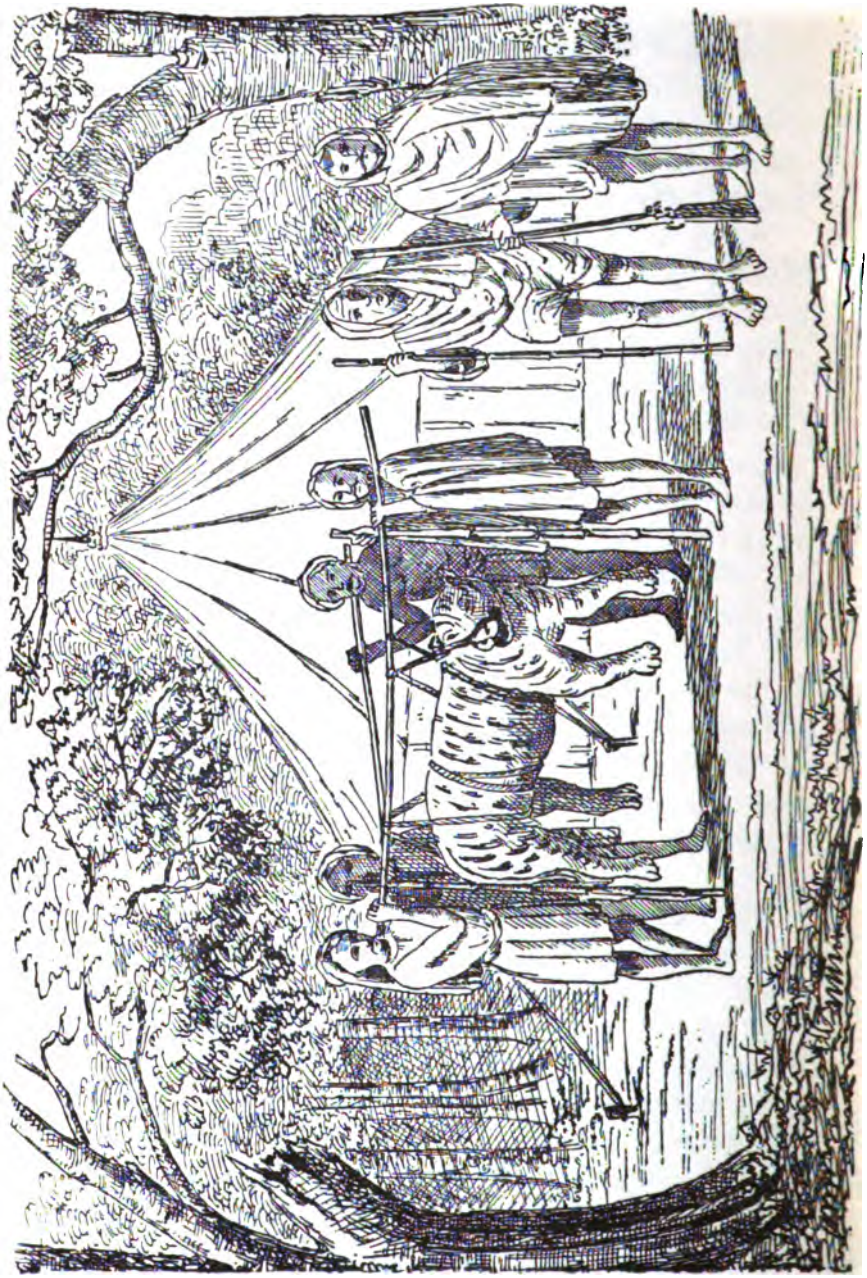
"Several years ago an artilleryman attempted for a wager to swim across the basin, and although he succeeded in getting over, it was necessary to convey him to an hospital, where he died within a few hours from the effect of the hot water. Not having tested it by a thermometer, I cannot tell the precise heat.

"The Brahmans say, so holy is the well by the power of the goddess Seeta, that, although boiling, it performs the miracle of keeping rice and eggs thrown into it in an uncooked state. I saw a great quantity of rice which remained unswollen in the water. Not being a pious Hindoo, I conclude the water to be below the boiling point."

The religious story of Seeta is well known. She was the wife of Rama, and was carried off by a wonderful and rascally giant, called Ravuna; but Rama paid him off, and with the assistance of Major-General Hunooman, K.C.B., with his army of monkeys, he killed the ravisher and rescued his wife.

Seeta was subsequently subjected to a painful ordeal to test her chastity.

Of the veritable "Hunooman," stripped of his



imaginary splendour, I have given some account in my tenth chapter.

An interesting incident occurred during our sojourn, of which I took a sketch. The subject represented is that of an old "shikaree" (sportsman) bringing the dead body of a tiger to the magistrate for the reward which was authorised by Government on such occasions. The old man was celebrated for his prowess and success, but on this occasion he was not the hero, but his son, whose successful shot had brought the beast to the earth. The exultant father, who had for the first time transferred the weapon, now brought the youth, gun in hand, to receive not only the promised reward, but the congratulation of the magistrate.

My sketch was taken on the spot, exactly as the group stood before me. Many years afterwards, when I lent my pictures for exhibition at the International Exhibition in 1872, this, among the others, was framed on the wall. One day, in the Indian annexe, I overheard a gentleman explaining to a party of ladies, with much eloquence, the subjects of several of my Indian pictures. I was much gratified by his complimentary expressions; but when he turned to this sketch, he said, in a very confident tone, "That's a bad picture! very bad! no one ever saw a tiger in such an attitude as that—it is impossible!" The poor tiger was dead and had no choice!

Mr. Edward Lockwood, in his interesting little book lately published, called *Natural History, Sport, and Travel*, describes the well-known hill "Pir Pahar"—the principal object which meets the eye on approaching the station of Monghyr by the river—as "one of the

Dog's Tomb.

most beautiful spots in India, if not in the world." Without entirely endorsing this enthusiastic description, I can truly say that it is picturesque and striking. There are many other noticeable objects, one of which, a dog's tomb, is here annexed. Few dogs have been so honoured.

The Jangheera rocks lie between Monghyr and Bhagulpore; they are specially holy, because the river flows from the south towards the north.

It was at Kooshtia, in the immediate neighbourhood of this station, that Dr. Cotton, the Bishop of Calcutta, met his death by drowning. My son-in-law, E. Lockwood, who was with him at the time, has thus described the awful catastrophe :—

"On arriving at the cemetery we were met by all the

European residents at Kooshtia, about half a dozen, and a native Christian, with whom the Bishop spoke a few kind earnest words, which made the poor man's eyes sparkle, for native Christians are an out-cast race. The ground was then consecrated, and the Bishop gave us a short address, in which he said that, although all Christians hoped their bodies after death would rest in consecrated ground, yet, as we were exiles from our native country, in a land where death might come upon us unaware, at places far from consecrated ground, yet the true Christian need not fear, for his soul was saved with its Creator, whether his body fell upon the battle-field or upon the sandy plain. An hour after he had spoken these words, he was lying at the bottom of the Gorai river.

"We returned together from the cemetery, and when we had arrived at a point near the river, we alighted from the trolly to make way for an engine which was coming along the line. The Bishop's lameness was then apparent, and I caught him by the arm to prevent him, as I thought, falling on the line as the engine was passing.

"On arriving at the bank opposite where the yacht was lying, I suggested that I should help his lordship across the narrow plank, but this he declined, so I wished him good-bye, and turned to go away. I had not gone half-a-dozen steps, when I heard a splash, and a servant who was on the plank called out, 'The lord sahib had fallen in the water.' I ran to the bank, expecting to see him rise to the surface, but I saw nothing, neither his body, nor his hat, nor the stick he was carrying at the time he fell.

"He had evidently struck his foot against the projecting plank, and, losing his balance, fallen into the stream, which was running like a mill-race at the time. Several of the native sailors witnessed the accident from the yacht, and as they were excellent swimmers, with hardly any incumbrance in the shape of clothing, they jumped into the stream, but could render no assistance whatever. A boat was quickly manned, and we searched the river, until all hopes were gone. Early next morning I went in a boat several miles down the river, enquiring from all I met, but no one had seen his lordship's body, which was never recovered."

A sad and impressive tragedy!

Our next stoppage was at Bhagulpore, where we stayed for a day with Mr. and Mrs. William Alexander, and after several more days' sailing, we arrived at Morshedabad, where we remained for some time with Mr. F. Lewis, the artist, who was living at that time in the Nawab's palace. Mr. Lewis was engaged to paint a large picture of a Durbar, in which the Nawab himself, Henry Torrens, the Governor-General's Agent, Captain Showers, and other characters were introduced.

On this occasion he took a sketch of my wife, but it was not very successful.

We had formed an acquaintance with Mr. Lewis on his first arrival in Calcutta. He was the son of the great engraver, a man of marked talent and unlimited enthusiasm, but, like many enthusiastic men, he was easily disheartened, and India at that time was not a country where art was appreciated.

I felt deeply for his position, and did all I could to

relieve his anxieties and forward his purpose; and before he left India I was glad to perceive that he received several orders for large pictures at a handsome remuneration.

His gratitude to me for the little assistance I was able to afford him, was far beyond my desert; but his letters served to show the warmth of his heart and sensitiveness of his nature.

At the close of our tour we returned to our home in Calcutta, all the better for our interesting trip, but not sorry to settle down once more in our pleasant home in Chowringhee Road.

Our friends the Bushbys were living three or four houses from us. My wife's nephew, C. Hobhouse, was still with us, and we had many valuable friends around.

Some months after this we had arranged that my wife should go to England to fetch our eldest daughter, who was then seventeen years old. Our children, who had for some time after their arrival in England, lived first with my dearest mother and eldest sister, had after their death been transferred to the charge of my eldest brother, the Rev. Archdale Wilson Tayler, Vicar of Stoke Newington; after his death they were living with his widow.

To escape the hot season, my wife's departure was fixed for March 1848. She sailed in the steamer *Bentinck*, commanded by Captain Kellock.

Charles Hobhouse went with me to see her on board, and we returned in veritable sadness from the vessel, feeling deeply the loss of her beloved companionship.

These frequent separations are the one drawback in Anglo-Indian life. Henceforth, and for upwards of a

year, I was doomed to bachelor life, with my pencil as my companion, and the prospect of the return of wife and daughter for my consolation.

During the ensuing hot weather, Major Bankes, whom we had known intimately at Cuttack some years ago, came to live with us, and was a most agreeable addition to the two deserted bachelors of Chowringhee.

Dances and tableaux gave place to billiards and bachelors' parties, miscellaneous small talk to grave discussions and political prose, and we learned to feel how large a portion of the pleasantness of life depends upon female association.

One amusing incident, in the course of our discussion, I am tempted to mention.

We had while at dessert, after a largish dinner-party, broached the interesting subject of love. The discussion had been protracted, and various causes assigned or suggested in regard to its mysterious origin, cause, and progress. General Scott and Seton Karr were among the party.

At the close of the argument, just as one emphatic opinion had been somewhat warmly pronounced, and enthusiastically maintained, General Scott, who had been comfortably dozing during the latter part of the argument, woke from his snooze, and in a sleepy, half-smothered tone, as he slowly lifted up his head, said, "Ah"—with a long yawn—"Is that *love* you are talking about? Oh, it is all propinquity!" The shout of laughter with which this prosaic conclusion was received, after all our romantic speculations, can be imagined. The speaker was called "Propinquity Scott" for many days after, and would be as amused as anyone

else, at the present moment, if the facts were recalled to his mind. Whether the disputants agreed or not with the unromantic but decidedly practical sentiment, I do not know.

At the beginning of October following, I made arrangements for my second tour, for the purpose of visiting the eastern districts of Bengal, which I had not yet seen.

CHAPTER XXV.

MY SECOND TOUR.

Passage by Steamer.—Incidents during the Voyage.—Fellow-passengers' Portraits.—Pass Rumpore Bauleah, Bhagulpore Monghyr, &c. — Reach Patna, and Dinapore. — Stay with Lieutenant Eden.—Portrait of Subahdar.—Remain for Several Days.—Sonepore Fair.—Description.—Origin of Meeting.—Characters. — Boxwalas. — Arab Merchants. — Tattoos. — Elephants. — Surreptitious Abstraction of Sketch-Book. — Change of Character of Festival since Introduction of Railways.—Return to Dinapore.—Slight Intimation of the Principal Subjects to be Dealt with in Vol. II.—Conclusion.

As I have still in my possession a journal which I took at the time, dotting down the incidents of the day, during a trip from Calcutta to Dinapore in a river steamer, I here transcribe it, as giving a more accurate idea of the character and events of my progress than any after-description can. Since the introduction of railways such trips are almost unknown. Patna, 400 miles from Calcutta, is reached in eighteen hours instead of eight days by dâk or fifteen days by boat; but this little voyage,

enlivened by the society of friends, the picturesque and interesting scenery on the banks of the Ganges, and the several stoppages on the way, with their incidents and accompaniments, is a thing to be remembered, and will not, I hope, prove uninteresting to the reader.

"October 15th, 1848.—Embarked on board the steamer *Sir Frederick Currie* bound for Allahabad, and after about an average proportion of bustle, confusion, and delay, fairly weighed anchor, and soon left the "City of Palaces" in the distance.

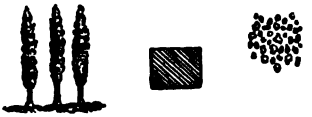
"Our departure had been delayed several days beyond that fixed for the start by an accident, more curious than pleasant for those who suffered by it. The thatched roof of the "flat," a thing extensive enough to cover a young Bengal village, was lifted clean off the vessel by the wind, and carried bodily against the masts of a large ship anchored close by. The enormous surface thus presented to the wind had the effect of putting the unfortunate ship, to which it had attached itself, under a 'press of sail' while in the midst of a furious gale, and the unpleasant consequence was that all the top-masts toppled into the water. The flat itself was made a clean sweep of, and a box, called by courtesy a cabin, a sort of cross between a hen-coop and a meat-safe, which I had just engaged for the trip to Patna for 168 rupees, was reported *non inventus*. All, however, had been restored before we embarked, and an awning substituted for the flighty choppah. We had a pleasant run for a few hours before nightfall, and anchored a little above 'Willow Berry.'

"The first portion of our passage lay through the Sunderbunds.

"Friday, 20th.—Several ships dismasted or otherwise injured during the late gale, which has been very severe at sea, passed us to-day on their way to Calcutta.

"We passed 'Mud Point' and entered the Sunderbunds.

"Adjoining this unhappy-sounding spot is an estate, so-called, the property of C. Prinsep; it is marked on the map thus,—



TREES. TANK. RUINS.

"Saw several gigantic alligators basking on the banks; some spotted deer, also, were seen grazing among the trees which fringe the water's edge on either side.

"Tigers were looked for only, but they are very numerous, and the officers tell us that none of the crew can be persuaded to venture on shore.

"After a satisfactory and pleasant run we anchored in the centre of a noble stream, the Thakooran, in the Sunderbunds, and, as the malaria-bearing jungles were at a considerable distance, we ventured to sleep on board again, instead of being parboiled or smothered in the cabins.

"Saturday, 21st.—A wretched cold and headache, clearly the consequence of deck-sleeping while still in the Sunderbunds. Fish caught by throwing nets at night from the prow of the ship on each side; prawns and bumalos, and a beautiful little silver thing called 'chooree' by the natives, which I drew.

"One evening two female servants, English and half-

caste, rushed up on deck exclaiming in gasping accents, that a dreadful 'monster' had risen from the water close to their cabin windows. When assured of the improbability, if not the impossibility, of this, the Englishwoman exclaimed, 'Indeed, sir, it is true; it rose and blew at us.' This turned out to be the fishing-net suddenly drawn up just opposite the cabin window, dripping with water and with a fish struggling and kicking in the folds.

"An hour or so after this alarm an amusing incident occurred. We were assembled in the saloon (so-called) when some one of the party suggested that a glass of

grog would be acceptable. One of the gentlemen on board then said that his khidmatgar was a first-rate grog-maker, and his name being mentioned, there was a general cry for him. In two or three minutes the man, who had been fast asleep, rushed into the room in a sort of panic, when he was greeted with a roar of laughter. His master had presented him with an English shirt, in which he had been sleeping. He forgot the fact. His figure was sublime and his embarrassment dramatic

"Sunday, 22nd.—Still a bad headache. We reached Coolna in the afternoon, where we anchored for the evening to take in coal, and the passengers turned out for an evening stroll.

"Monday, 23rd.—Two Government steamers with troops on board met us this morning. Just as we passed, the chimnies of the respective steamers emitted a sudden grunt and puff, which was explained to us as intended for a salute. The engineer of our vessel, a very magnificent young man, who wears blue neckcloths and folds his arms, has the credit of having taught his fellow-craftsmen this dodge.

"The kindness of a fellow-passenger having provided me with a cabin for my dormitory, I shall hope to evade further colds. The other gentlemen passengers (save those who have wives with them) still sleep on deck.

"An unvaried succession of monotonous days affords but little scope for observation, and but few events worthy of record. My time was occupied incessantly in drawing portraits of our fellow-passengers, several of whom were about to separate from each other at the end of their journey.

"The only occurrence approaching adventure was

connected with a being of Eurasian extract and very disagreeable behaviour. He was a strange moody man with a shabby exterior, uninviting aspect, and very unsettled fanatical eye. Being a deck-passenger he ate his meals uncleanly, on hen-coops, his seat and his plate on the same level, and his legs uncomfortably tucked up sideways to avoid being pecked by melancholy hens through the bars.

"When not eating or cleaning himself he was perpetually cherishing a white game-cock, on which he lavished the most tender and affectionate attentions, carrying it gently under his arms, and fondling it with soft and blandishing endearments.

"One day there was a sudden row and scuffle in the dark regions of the steamer behind the engine, and the hero of the cock was seen, amidst the smoke and the coal-dust, plunging rapidly about and launching wildly against the nose and eyes of an unhappy native, who howled and bellowed under the infliction, and doubled his knees up to his eyes with pain, as the infuriate man digged him in the face or punched him in the stomach.

"A rush was made to the rescue, and the wild man was pinned from behind by many hands, pulled back, and squeezed violently, while he panted, and glared savagely on his foe, like a disappointed tiger.

"An explanation of this outbreak being demanded, the shabby unknown accused his enemy of impertinence and insult, but failed altogether to convince his hearers that any adequate grounds had been given for the abrupt and fierce pummelling which had been administered.

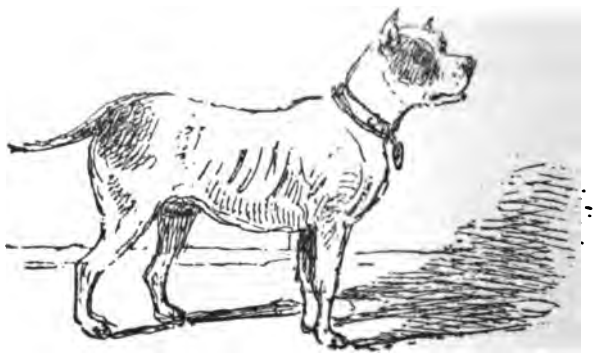
"A better excuse was found in the wild eye of the pugilist, who, it turned out, was lunatic, so far as to be

violently affected at the moon's changes, and became, as has been seen, dangerous.

"The poor fellow suffered for his ferocity in the tenderest point; on the following morning the white cock was found murdered in his bed, and the wild eye was dimmed with tears.

"One other sudden death, among the brute passengers, attracted notice.

"On the flat, which was crammed from stem to stern with a miscellaneous crowd of articles, animate and inanimate, was a very morose and sanguinary bull-dog, chained up in the only spare foot of deck; a sinister animal who eyed all the human beings that passed him with the evident intention of tasting the first piece of calf that came within reach of his jaws, which were always moving slightly, as if chewing imaginary leg and enjoying it.



"This unpleasant companion was endured for several days, with ill-disguised dissatisfaction by the visitants of the flat, who had to pass and repass within an inch of his nose.

"But one morning his place was found empty, and there was cheerfulness among the passengers.

"His fate remained a mystery, but the ugly rumour went abroad that, the day before, the captain had been seen narrowly saving his legs from a snap made by the grim jaws, and sad conclusions were drawn. 'Cerberus' had no friends, and the captain was an autocrat.

"We reached in our course, Comercolly, Rampore Beauleah, Rajmahal, Bhagulpore, Monghyr, and Patna, and anchored at Dinapore, on the 2nd of November. The only occurrences, which diversified the monotony of our voyage, were the sundry strolls on shore at these stations, the usual traffic in the various manufactures at Monghyr, and the visit of some few residents.

"All these places have been so frequently described, that there is little left to say. At Comercolly we saw one meagre individual with a few mangy and dilapidated white tippets, which came out in strong relief against the heap of coals, as he held them up for exhibition.

"At Rampore Beauleah, which we reached on the 27th, a few silk merchants came on board with Berhampore silk, for which they persuaded us they asked most reasonable prices; when an attempt was made to beat them down, they said, 'Calcutta man say double price, Berhampore man say true price.' A fact worthy of being communicated to the marines.

"The Commissioner, Mr. Taylor, came on board, brought us papers, and such gossip as the place afforded.

"We coaled, and started again, and in about two hours, anchored at Rajmahal.

"28th.—Coaling again. Some adventurous passen-

gers, including a lady newly arrived from England, and zealous for sights and lions, walked early in the morning to see the ruins. I remained on the bank, and sketched.

"At Bhagulpore, which we reached in the evening of the 30th, we enjoyed a very pleasant stroll. Colonel and Mrs. Mountain passed the evening with the William Alexanders at Monghyr. A confused and clamorous host of hawkers invaded the steamer directly she anchored. Punkahs, mats, baskets, straw bonnets, avadavats, chameleons, toasting-forks, gun-screws, sticks, tables, with divers other miscellaneous manufactures, were pressed upon us by rabid dealers, with a zeal and pertinacity which was striking but unpleasant. Considerable capital was invested in singularly useless articles, bonnets at 10 annas (14d.) each were plentifully purchased, and great dealings were effected in toasting-forks. I invested sundry shekels for a cluster of parti-coloured balls for sweet little Edith Capell, a bright beaming child who had stolen my heart.

"We then walked to the Botanical Gardens and returned to the steamer, still waylaid by untiring mats, and the everlasting toasting-forks.

"My destination being Sonepore, I had intended to land at Patna, and make arrangements for crossing the river at leisure, but as we arrived at an early hour, and the steamer was to anchor for the night at Dinapore, one of the coaling stations, I was too glad to spend another evening with my fellow-passengers, in whose society I had passed a very pleasant fortnight, and for some of whom I had conceived sincere regard and esteem. I went on, therefore, in the steamer to Dinapore, some eight miles beyond Patna.

"The scene at Dinapore, when we anchored at the ghat, was very striking. It was a Hindoo festival, and crowds of people, chiefly women, dressed in the bright colours which the unrivalled dyes of India can alone produce, and which the rays of an Indian sun so wondrously heighten, were grouped on the bank, bathing and chattering, and casting flowers into the water.

"The moment the steamer anchored, a stream of table-cloth and towel vendors, wax candle makers, and Patna toy-men, flowed in upon the deck, and a repetition of the commercial transactions which had been carried on at Monghyr, forthwith commenced with much talking and gesticulation.

"After dinner, we went on shore to hear the band of the 80th, but my especial favourites Captain and Mrs. Capell were spirited away to pass the evening with a friend at Deegah, to my particular disgust.

"We passed the evening on deck, when I acted sentinel over little Edith Capell, and after her parents returned, my health was drunk by all the passengers, in champagne sported for the purpose, and I bade them all farewell with feelings of sincere regret, and with heartfelt wishes for their well-being and happiness.

"I remained two days with Lieutenant Eden, at Dinapore, and drew a sketch of a Mahommedan subhadar, and a sepoy of the 39th, which so pleased the officers, that they wished to be allowed to have it lithographed.

"On Saturday I went over to Sonepore with my hostess, Mrs. Hathorne, after tiffing with Colonel and Mrs. Ramsay, where she (Mrs. H.), was staying, and reached the tents at Sonepore, at sunset of the 9th November." (*Here ends my Journal.*)

Having thus transferred the notes of our steam trip just as they were written at the time, I must not omit to mention the pleasure afforded many years afterwards, and even to the present day, by some of the acquaintances made during that short trip. First and foremost was Colonel John Low, who, with his wife, was on his way to Ajmere.

Of the character of Sir John Low, as he afterwards became, it is difficult to speak too highly. Of all the noble men who have distinguished themselves in the military service in India some others may have been more brilliant, but few, if any, have throughout the long period of his service, and in the varied appointments which he held, exhibited such noble disinterestedness, such firm and unswerving consistency, such simplicity, unselfishness, unshaken maintenance of the right, and such thorough independence of principle and action.

It was not till many years after this meeting that I had occasion to realise the true nobility of his character, under circumstances which I shall relate fully in my second volume. Sir John Low lived to the age of ninety-five. A few months before his death I had the pleasure of seeing him in his bed, and I shall never forget the interview. Always remarkably handsome, his countenance during this his last stage of existence was impressively beautiful, and when, scarcely able to speak, he clasped my hand, and in a half-whisper said, "My dear, dear friend," I could scarcely restrain my feelings.

Several others of the same party I have with extreme pleasure met with. Mrs. Mountain I found two years ago in the person of Lady Lefroy, the wife of Sir

John Lefroy, K.C.S.I.; Mrs. Capell, with whom I had formed an intimate acquaintance after our brief companionship in the steamer, is no more; but it has been with great satisfaction that within the last few days I have discovered that Colonel, then Captain, Capell is living, and that my infant charmer is with him. Edward Prinsep also, a distinguished civilian, is hale and hearty still, and resting on his laurels.

Sonepore.

No social gathering in India has attained such celebrity as the *Sonepore* meeting. The mystic "sungum," or junction of the holy river, so sacred in the mind of the superstitious Hindoo, yearly attracts a vast concourse of religious bathers, who, at the full of the moon, rush at a given signal, with the force of a torrent and the roar of a cataract, into the confluent waters, each human wave struggling for pre-eminence of submersion, and each individual maddened with fanatic excitement. The same signal which drives the enthusiastic dippers into the holy stream lets loose a host of more secular and earthly devotees, who, taking advantage of the crowd and the hubbub, seize any valuable appendage they can lay hold of; tearing bracelets, amulets, and even nose-rings from the unhappy women, whose sufferings are unheeded, and whose screams are drowned in the tumultuous uproar.

The assemblage of this vast crowd has naturally brought with it all the materials of a fair, and during some days of the meeting every description of merchandise is procurable, animate and inanimate, from a

rhinoceros to hermetically-sealed carrots. Extensive topes of mango-trees are crammed with elephants, horses, and ponies; not a foot of ground is unoccupied. Such roaring and neighing, snorting and stamping, and hurly-burly; such picturesque groups; such splendid colours, *quis digne scripserit?*

Before proceeding to a description of the fair, I will say a few more words in explanation of the mystic "sungum."

The following extract from Moore's *Oriental Fragments*, if only intelligible, may be interesting to the reader:—

"It is the consecrated salt-streams of Kheti that a Hindu enthusiast would revel in. Two of them joining is a dear union or 'sungum,' and these, with a third subterraneously, is the mythos of myths. Ablution here is triply purifying; suicide is ecstatic and meritorious. Hither resorts the youthful widowed 'Sati,' or Pure, rejoicing in her approaching liberation from the trammels of the flesh, and the aged to sigh their last in the way of nature, or by hastening their arrival into the world of spirits.

"The Hindu poets call such tripotamic union 'Triveni,' or the three plaited locks.

"The geographical fact of the divine Gunga and Yamuna joining visibly near the site of Allahabad in Bengal—modern as to name—and, as they assert, subterraneously with their holy sister Saraswati (the meandering consorts respectively of Siva, Vishnu, and Brahma), is metamorphosed by the most poetical and amorous sect, and admired and sung by all, into Krishna braiding the musky tresses of his delighted Rhada."

A full description of the Sonepore meeting would

occupy a volume. As a social gathering of the English residents it has supreme and unrivalled attractions. Taking place at the close of the enervating six months during which the hot season, from April to June, and then the rains from June to September, have combined to stupify and enfeeble the unhappy British sojourners, it forms the auspicious entrance upon the fresh and invigorating delight of the cold weather, when, for at least three months, the climate of India is, perhaps, the finest in the world.

It may be imagined with what delight this early gathering is hailed by every exhausted individual within reach.

The chief portion of the ground is occupied by an extensive grove of mango-trees. These trees enclose a level plain of considerable extent, which forms a race-course; on one side of this is a stand containing large rooms suited for the enjoyment of the "light fantastic toe," and the popular amusement of supper.

The whole society live in tents which are sent beforehand, with furniture, servants, and all the paraphernalia requisite for a gigantic pic-nic of fourteen or fifteen days. Carriages, saddle-horses, and buggies are all brought over, and some of the visitors form large parties. We generally mustered ten or twelve ourselves.

The principal piece of furniture is a "shemyana," a large square roof of tent-cloth, supported by pillars. This, with a carpet spread below, and all the necessary articles of furniture duly arranged, forms the principal sitting-room; while the sleeping-tents, bathing-rooms, and other accessories of Anglo-Indian life, are pitched around it.

The change of air and scene, the luxuriance of the trees, the relaxation from the drudgery of office, the meeting of friends and the invigorating sensation of cold, which increases daily as the season advances,—all these elements combined would, of themselves, constitute intense enjoyment: but there are many other sources of pleasure; every other morning there is a race; every other evening there is a ball—a band is constantly in attendance. Everybody is in good humour, and all is "mirth and pleasantness."

On this occasion I went with my friends the Hathorns. Hathorn was the judge of Chuprah, one of the stations

"I CAN'T A TALE UNFOLD."—THE BRIGADIER'S BODY-GUARD.

of the Patna division ; but there were many other friends there.

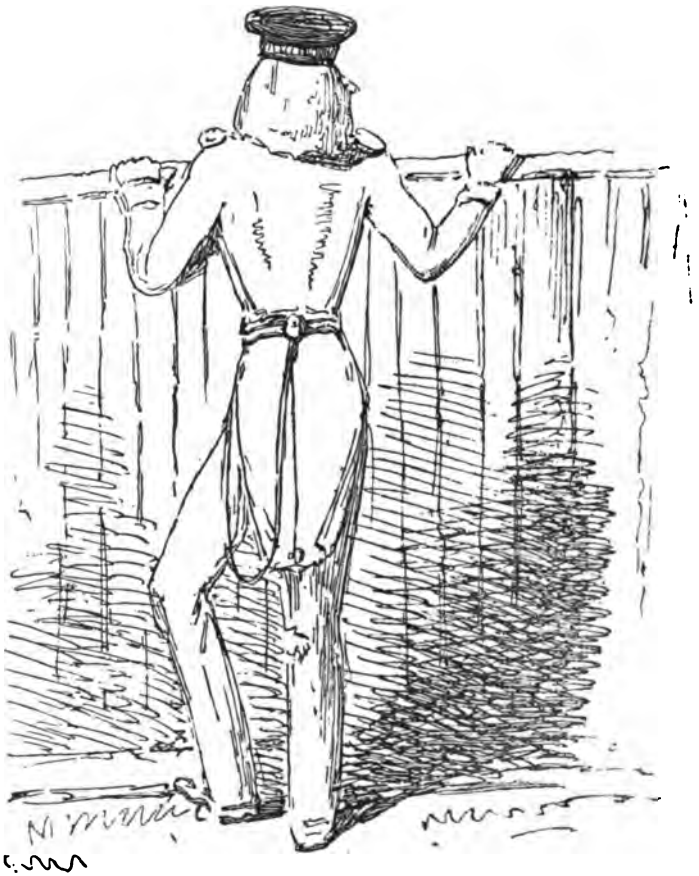
Of course I took my sketch-book, for which there was no end of subjects.

The following little back-view of fellow-creatures was taken on the first race-day ; the subjects, innocent of the honour being bestowed upon them behind their backs, were looking at the race behind a wooden enclosure.

They will speak for themselves, but, as a witty spectator suggested, the tale of the first at least was a short one.

The first is the Brigadier's Body-Guard ; the second

is a typical representation of the Indian jockey, with his legs *au naturale*; the third is an example of military and somewhat effeminate precaution which rather amused us, especially as we, ladies and all, were contentedly enduring the sun's rays without any additional covering.



This is a group of our "men and brethren" carefully drawn from life :

"The human face divine,
Quot homines, tot physiognomies."

The little boy in the next sketch was very charming, he was the son of the cornet-player of the band, and while the musicians were making the welkin roar with their instruments, the queer little fellow, getting hold of a piece of an extra cornet, puffed and blew away upon the silent and irresponsive metal, with quite as much enthusiasm and energy as the larger players, and evidently believed he was contributing to the concert. We named him the "unposted cornet."

In the midst of drawing these heterogeneous nothings, I myself became the victim of a practical joke, in which the principal performer was a facetious young lady. I had been sitting on a long seat, while sketching, and suddenly wanting to speak to somebody, got up, and imprudently left my sketch-book on the seat. "Victim

THE UNPOSTED CORNET.

of misplaced confidence!" when I returned, no book was there. Five or six ladies were seated in a row, and they all disclaimed having touched it. There was a certain indescribable atmosphere about their looks and manners that led me to suspect dishonesty in some one or other of them; but I appealed in vain. I was invited to look among the folds of their dresses (bustles were then very large), but all to no purpose; the party broke up, and I went away, disconsolate and bookless.

When we returned to breakfast in the tent, a mischievous damsel suddenly came up with the sketch-book, which she said, in a most innocent tone and expression, she had found. With it was a piece of paper; the paper contained a poetical, and would-be pathetic, squib,

describing the event. Who was the writer, I could only guess. I give the ode below :—

THE BOOK AND THE BUSTLE.

"A merry scene appeared around,
And smiles enclosed the racing-ground;
While foremost in the crowd was seen
A gentleman, whose down-cast mien
Would strike the casual passer-by,
For grief was pictured in his eye;
Deep on his visage sat despair,
As bustles he searched everywhere,
And cried with eager, anxious tone,
My sketching-book, alas! is flown;
My genius waits, my pencil sighs
To draw that horse as past he flies.
Oh, ladies! I beseech you, look
Behind you for my valued book.
The ladies, feeling much surprise,
Upon him gazed with wondering eyes;
With willing and polite address,
The cushions soft they gently press,
And striving hard to hide a smile
They inwardly do laugh the while;
While sadly the poor genius sighs
Upon the horse that past him flies.
No breakfast can he eat that day,
But doubts in fortunes power to sway
The hearts of those who stole the book,
But now are melted by his look;
The mystery 's solved, the lost returns,
The artist's heart within him burns,
And when at tiffin he appears,
No trace remains of fallen tears.

"Sonepore, November 18th, 1848."

And here I must say a few more words in regard to the native departments, which, if not so attractive to the

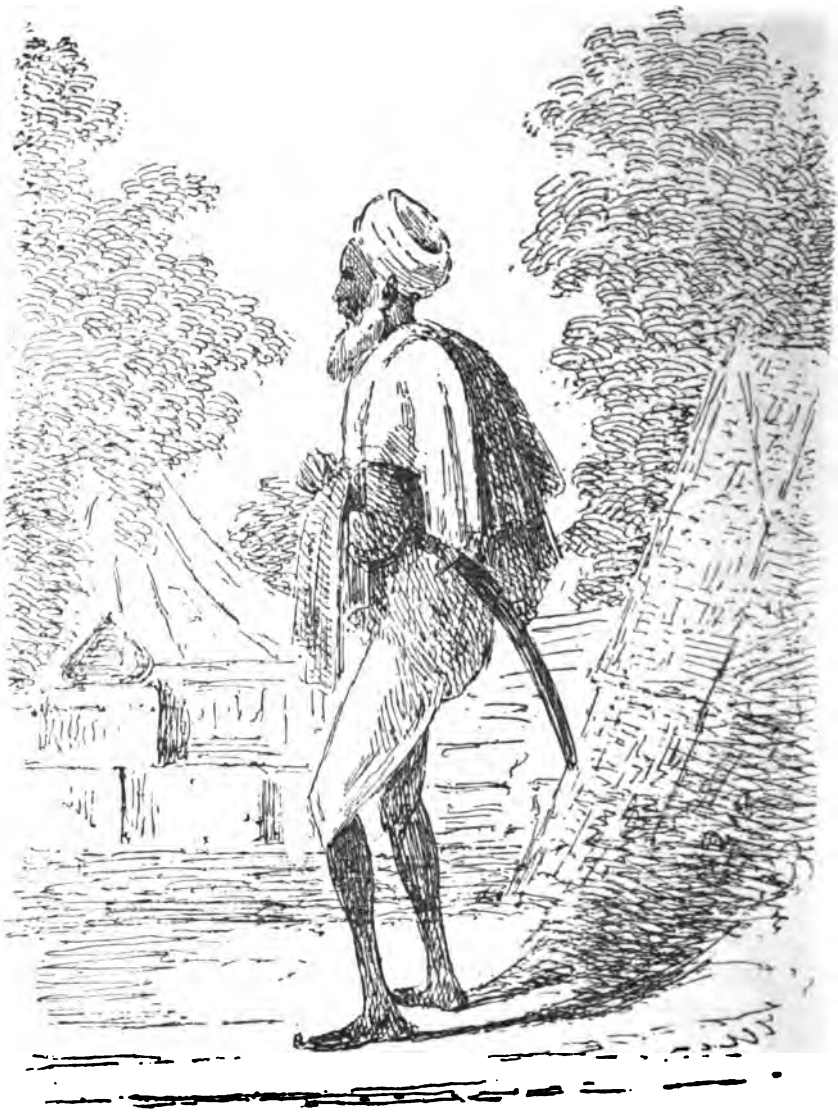
desk-bound official or enthusiastic sportsman as the English, are not devoid of interest.

In other parts of India the annual fair, or Mela, as it is called, is the event of the year. They are, in fact, commercial centres, where every description of property, natural or artificial, is congregated; cattle, merchandise, agricultural produce, cloths, and metals, all are here brought together, not for show or amusement, but for serious barter; it is the assemblage to which all look forward for the disposal of their wares.

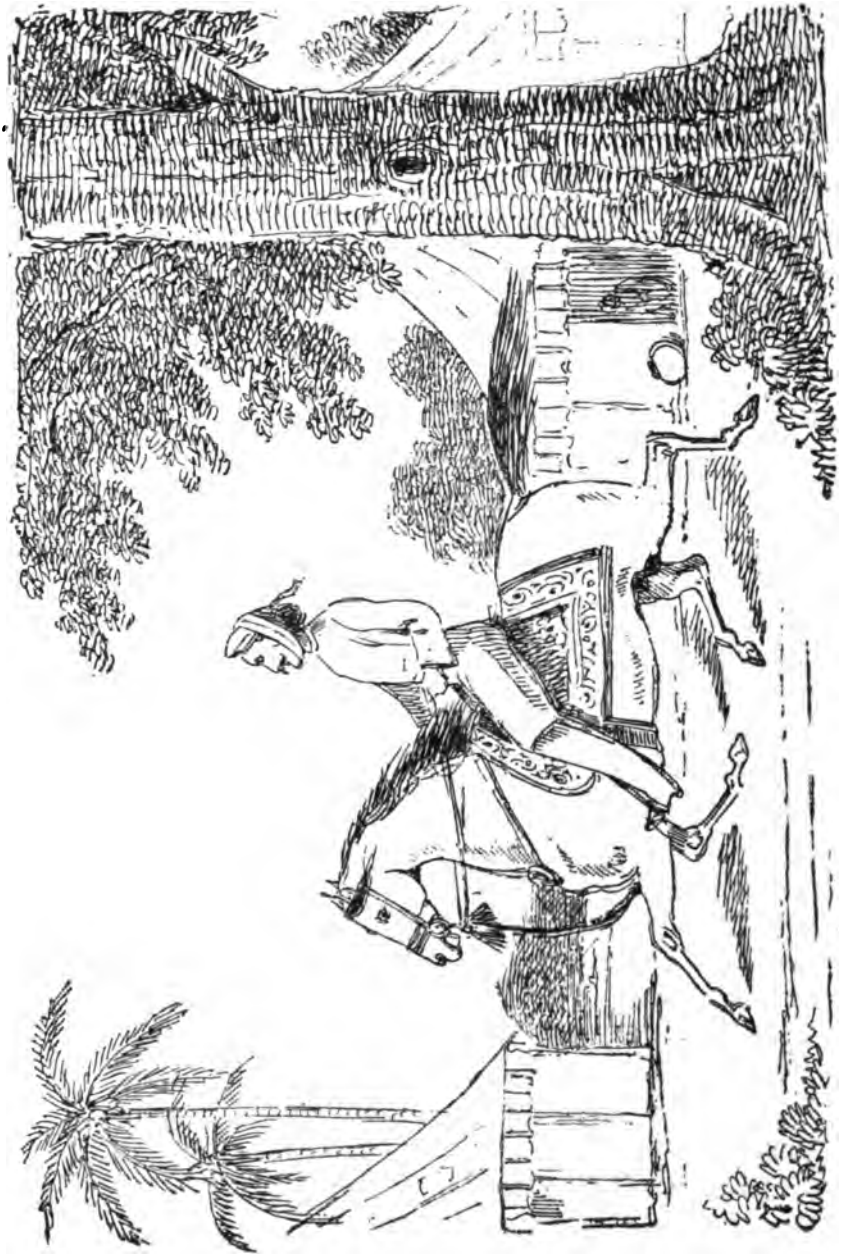
But though the gathering is thus practical in its principal end, it necessarily brings together other objects, not only the ornamental and useful, but the sacred and religious, the strange and the picturesque, the beautiful and the hideous; the whole scene, in short, is ultra-Asiatic and sensational.

Professedly, they are religious festivals, held at the end of autumn to celebrate the return of the god Shiva from the lower regions, where he had during the hot weather been engaged in deadly and most unpleasant conflict with Indra.

But at Sonepore, although there is a certain proportion of Asiatic elements, and a partial admixture of religious enthusiasm, that proportion and that admixture is exceedingly small and insignificant compared with the great Mela in other parts of India. At Sonepore, the large assemblage of Englishmen, with their wives, families, and attendants, monopolize the ground, with its race-course and cricket-field, while the picturesque, though unmeaning, exhibition of bears, monkeys, mendicants, and other half-disgusting, half-horrible objects are in the background. The space occupied by the



BURKUNDAZ, OR "HURLER OF LIGHTNING" (see p. 504).



English visitors is annually enlarged, that allotted to Orientalism proportionately contracted. Deformities and horrors disappear; what is useful, interesting, and ornamental, remains.

At the same time there are objects quite enough to amuse the idle, and gratify the curiosity of the inquisitive, and certainly sufficient to remind the English visitor that he is in the far east.

There are jewellers and merchants, with all manner of curious objects, sufficient to entice purchasers and fill their own pockets, and there is the Burkundaz, or "hurler of lightning" represented on page 502, to keep the peace and protect property.

But the most picturesque object is the tent and equipage of the Arab horse-merchant, who is invariably seen at the fair with his travelling camel and lovely horses. It is a treat to see one of these men bring out a choice steed to show an inquiring purchaser. The arched and glossy neck, clothed with thunder, with the soft, yet daring eye, upturned nose, and breathing nostril, forms a picture which Landseer, Rosa Bonheur, or Frederick Tayler would greet with delight.

The merchant on the occasion of our visit, mounted with a spring on the high-bred back, and with a single snaffle in the horse's mouth, he dashed across the plain like Apollo's arrow, or Indra's thunderbolt, the noble creature obedient to every motion of the supple wrist and fingers, which seemed to play with the bridle like a dainty damsel preluding on the pianoforte.

It is the very poetry of riding, the true seat of Phidias.

Then you see a row of ponies which look as if

they would like to eat you; luckily the hind legs are well tied back, like ladies' petticoats in the present day, so they can but grind their teeth, and roll their glaring eyes like so many tigers. The ground under their fore feet is raised all along the line, a common trick among the dealers; it adds to the height, and sets off the tournure of the beasts.

Right good ponies they are, too, these snorting, shrieking furies, and to be purchased from Rs. 60 and upwards, but it is a puzzling thing to make a choice among the lot, and they are so set up with their heads tied to their tails, and their stomachs stuffed with all manner of unprofitable food, that a purchaser not "up" to artificial decoration would probably make a mess of his bargain.

The Government stud-horse is here to be seen. They are offered for sale, and their qualities displayed before crowds.

The ordinary hack is also a characteristic animal, though not graceful.

And here I must not omit the Boxwalas, whom we had the pleasure of seeing on this occasion.

Of the genus Boxwala I have already written in Chapter V. The species now before us was somewhat exceptional. Imitating the custom of the residential Boxwala, but without quite the same facilities of literary progress, these mild young men had prepared an elaborate list of goods with a flourishing prospectus, in which they "ventured (under the name of Nelson and Son) to appear before the public in the capacity of merchants." The most conspicuous article in the list, though not the only remarkable one, was "putrified

lime-juice," the name of which produced a chorus of laughter from the party in the tent, to the dismay of the men, "purified" being the word meant.

I took the sketch, while they were thus bewildered, but we made up for their distress by purchasing many of their good things.

Pages more might be written in regard to the diversified amusements of this unrivalled social meeting, which, without interfering with the necessary official duties, brings together all classes of military officers,

civilians, and indigo-planters, in social intercourse, thereby strengthening the kindly feelings of all, leading in many instances to future friendship, and laying the foundation of mutual goodwill and fellowship in a country where, during the greater part of the year incessant occupation, and at times conflicting interests, tend to artificial estrangement.

The pleasure of the meeting is further enhanced by the seasonable change of weather at the period of its occurrence, and, strange to say, by the limitation of its component parts. This latter characteristic, since the introduction of the railway, has been gradually changed, and not to the advantage of the gathering. Swells, officials, including even on one occasion the Governor-General, have bestowed the effulgence of their presence on the meeting; and the Sonepore Fair, which had for years been in fact a "family gathering," with no foreign intermixture, and no element of swelldom, self-exultation, or officialism, has to some extent degenerated into an everyday "party," and the rare excellence of informal warm-hearted sociability has been impaired.

On the occasion I am now describing, however, Sonepore was in natural and uncontaminated condition, and after a full realization of its unequalled charms, which in after days I frequently enjoyed with my wife and daughters, I returned to Dinapore and took up my quarters once more, for two or three days, with my young friend Lieutenant Eden.

A somewhat embarrassing circumstance occurred on this occasion, and one which caused great amusement when the secret cause was explained.

My host volunteered to take me round the station at

Dinapore, to pay respects, as a visitor, to the heads of society, including the commanding officer of the station, then Colonel Ramsay. As this was a voluntary act of politeness on my part, I naturally expected my visits to be received with the kind cordiality usually shown on such occasions, especially in India; but on each visit, and at every house, I could not help remarking an unusual appearance of constraint and coldness, which was not only inexplicable, but most unpleasant; at last, when at one house I found in the daughter of the family an acquaintance whom I had met before, the mystery was unearthed, for in an undertone "aside," she told me that they would have liked to ask me to stay to tiffin, but that Lieutenant Eden, who, though a new arrival, had been there some days, had so grossly neglected his obvious duty as a young officer, by failing to call upon her father and the other military gods, that he was deep in their bad books.

In fact, my kind host, after having thus given offence, had used me as a shield or buffer to save him from the consequences of his misdeeds, by going round under the protection of my wing.

We laughed with great glee after the discovery; but the criminal, on my advice, promised to apologise all round for his remissness.

My future movements, first to Katmandoo in Nepal, where I met with the celebrated Jung Buhadoor at his capital, and afterwards to Darjeeling, will be fully described and illustrated in my second volume.

I shall in that volume, also, have the gratification of recording the return from England of my wife and eldest daughter; our continued residence in Calcutta,

with the repetition of the *tableaux vivans*, which brought together friends old and new, and, spite of the unsatisfactory condition of my official endeavours in the stagnant Post Office, and the discouraging monotony of the "wet-blanket" system of government, lent a charm to our daily life which we have never forgotten, and still gratefully recal.

The memory, also, of old and valued friends (though the number of those still living is sadly thinned) is inexpressibly precious, and will afford pleasing material for reminiscences of those joyous days; and the more so as, with the exception of three or four individuals who have been estranged by interested motives, or the corrupting influence of antagonistic officialism, they have all throughout my days of adversity and persecution consoled and gratified me by their support and sympathy.

My second volume will also bring me to the thrilling events of the Indian Mutiny and Rebellion of 1857, with some at least of its sensational incidents; and finally, to the period of my non-official existence on what may be called the "other side of the curtain" of Indian life, after my retirement from the service, closing with our residence for three successive seasons at the viceregal sanatarium of Simla.

While recalling the various incidents of this portion of my Indian career, nothing has more forcibly struck me when consulting some of the books which profess to give descriptions of Anglo-Indian life and habits, than the extraordinary inaccuracy, in some instances absurdity, of the representations.

Among others, I will here give an extract from a work which in many respects is pleasant, interesting,

and instructive, which was launched under most favourable auspices, being dedicated, "by permission, to the Duchess of Kent and Princess Victoria," and has doubtless been read and appreciated by many.

The picture drawn of the "Young Civilian" I here quote, and while making due allowance for the inexperience of the author, and acquitting him of the sin of intentional misrepresentation, the thorough absurdity of the caricature thus exhaustively presented fills me with astonishment.

The following is the paragraph :—

Extract from the "Oriental Annual," 1835.

"The contrast between the mansion of an aristocratic civilian in Calcutta and the rude cottages of these hardy mountaineers is sufficiently striking. The former has everything around him which wealth can procure. Seated on an easy chair of the coolest construction, one leg carelessly thrown upon a handsome mahogany table, the other languidly resting on a costly morah,* he smokes his hookah in all the indolent luxury of a temperature of ninety-four degrees. His sircar † advances with a profound salaam to receive the orders for the day, the hookaburdar ‡ stands ready to replace the exhausted chillum, the peadah § to bear his master's commands wherever he may choose to have them conveyed, and the punka-bearer to fan him with the broad leaf of the palmyra. Every want is anticipated; all he has to do for himself is to think, and as soon as

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* Stool. † Steward.
‡ Hookah-holder. § Footman.

his wishes are expressed they are executed. His hair is dressed, his beard shaved, his feet are washed, and his nails pared, by his ready attendants. When he lolls on his couch he is fanned by an obedient Mussulman or Hindoo; when he sleeps a yak's tail is waved over his head in gentle and cooling undulations to keep off the mosquitoes, which would otherwise 'mark him for their own.' When he retires to his nightly repose he is undressed by his obsequious valet, and when he rises from his luxurious slumbers he is dressed by the same hand. When he goes abroad he is borne on the shoulders of four sturdy retainers attended by as many or more; or when he chooses to go on foot, covered by a chatta* which glitters with its costly array in the sunbeams, and followed by a host of servitors of various ranks and designations, his walk for pleasure or for exercise is a positive procession."

This book was published in 1834–35, five years after my arrival in India; but even five years before—in 1829—this picture of the daily life and habits of the civilian would have been ludicrously inappropriate.

I myself was an ordinary member of the service, and in no great extent different from my brethren, and yet, admitting that I may possibly have occasionally "thrown one leg upon a handsome mahogany table," it certainly was not a habit. "Costly morahs" for my feet I certainly cannot call to mind. As for every want being anticipated, and having "nothing to do but to think," it is all unreality and romance; and with regard to my

* An umbrella.

"hair being dressed," my "beard shaved," and my "nails pared by ready attendants," or a "yak's tail waved over my head in gentle and cooling undulations" when I slept, such scenes and doings never entered even into my dreams.

Some mischievous caricaturist must surely have been purposely misleading the too-confiding author!

Even the sketch which illustrated the scene thus described itself bears testimony to the inaccuracy, for instead of an "easy chair" the young civilian is placed on a hard and common seat, and the "costly morah" is an ordinary cane stool!*

But the book was published when steamers were not, when England was four months or more removed from India, and the realities of Indian life by tradition were caricatured on the stage, the English gentleman being represented as a spoiled, petted, and disorganised nabob, with spindle shanks and nankeen pantaloons.

And this ludicrous misrepresentation is not confined to the man; in another pleasant little book called *Narrative of a Three Months' March in India*, written by a woman, I find the following portrait of the Anglo-Indian lady:—

"There are many peculiarities which mark the Anglo-Indian ladies. Their steps in promenading even the ball-room are uncertain and irregular, notwithstanding that they almost invariably rest upon the arms of two gentlemen. When you advance towards them on a morning visit of ceremony, they rarely rise from the sofa or easy chair on which they recline, until you are quite

* Vide *Oriental Annual.*

close to them, and never advance a single step to give cordiality to the reception; whilst their languid motion to the servant who has ushered in the visitor, and the half-uttered 'Sahib' or 'Mem sahib ko chokee do,'* as the case may be, precedes the most local and trivial conversation that can be imagined."

When I remember the large party of ladies and gentlemen, "young men and maidens," who were at this time in Calcutta, and who took active part in our dramatic entertainments, their spirited and active habits, the entire absence of affectation or languor on the part of the ladies, or of idiotic luxuriousness in the men, their hearty enjoyment of all rational amusements, their kindly feeling and genuine sociability, and when I call to mind the many of either sex whose sympathising and disinterested friendship we now retain, I cannot but feel special indignation at these disparaging pictures, which are as inaccurate as they are absurd.

Doubtless the writer, deceived by one or two specimens accidentally encountered, followed the old Latin saying of "ex uno disce omnes," and, on that false principle, spread the circle of her portraiture to all around.

But the above is only one instance of the extent to which the character, habits, and customs of Anglo-Indians, especially of the female sex, have for years past been misrepresented.

At the period when we first reached India, viz. in 1829, the arrival of two or three English girls was doubtlessly an event creating undeniable sensation. Residents of Calcutta used to crowd down to the banks

* 'Give the lady a chair."

of the river, and gaze with intense curiosity on the new arrivals. Speculations of all kinds were excited; the forms and faces of the neophytes were the subjects of critical examination. Bachelors, young and old, were on the *qui vive*, and doubtless dim anticipations of incipient attachment caused occasional pulsation in youthful breasts.

Under the influence of such exceptional attentions, young ladies on their first arrival may for a time have been betrayed into temporary affectation, whilst the enervating atmosphere may have produced a passing state of self-satisfaction or indolence; but all this has been gradually changed, and the "uncertain footsteps" and languid bearing above described are utterly and now, for many years, absurdly inappropriate.

I venture, in short, to say that, in bearing, character, and refinement, the lady of India is, in all respects, on an equality with her sisterhood in England, and if we look beyond the outward form and semblance, and seek to gauge the higher qualities of the sex, we have only to refer to the records of recent history, and read in the pages of Kaye and Malleson the glorious achievements and noble bearing which, on so many occasions and under such appalling dangers, so widely characterised the "women of India."

Before closing this chapter, I would wish to mention a rather peculiar discovery just made, in connection with the process by which my sketches have been reproduced.

In my nineteenth chapter I have referred to the frequent portraits which I had drawn for private friends; likenesses of well-known and distinguished characters.

Many of these I still have in my possession. They were all done in pencil some thirty-five years ago, and formed part of a private collection which I still have.

Being desirous of inserting some of these, I made them over to the printer, and to my great astonishment, he reproduced them with the most extraordinary accuracy; every stroke in the original being brought out, smaller in size, but with an exactitude which was wonderful.

Several specimens of these, therefore, since the completion of my volume, I have introduced. One in page 397, of the present Lord Hardinge, who at the time that the sketch was made was private secretary to his father, the Governor-General, as I have described. The other, in page 398, is the likeness of Captain Hillier, at that time Aide-de-Camp to the Governor-General; a remarkably handsome man, now head of the Constabulary at Dublin. The third is of Sir Herbert Maddock, the Deputy-Governor of Bengal, who formed the principal figure in my large picture of the "Triumphal Reception of the Seikh Guns," p. 432.

Had I been aware of the completeness of this mode of transfer, the portraits would have been placed in their proper position, with special mention, before the pages were printed. I have reserved others for the second volume.

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